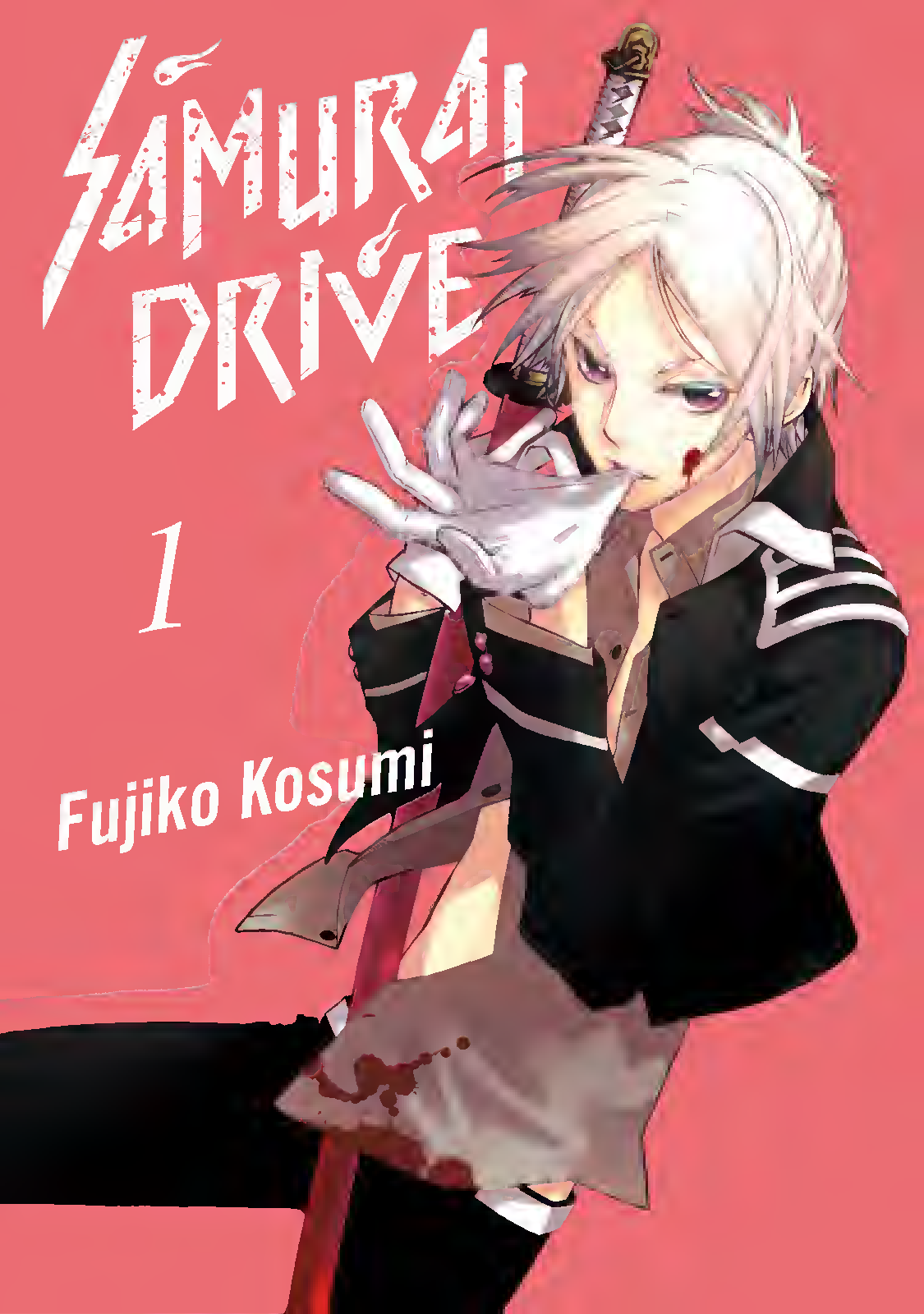
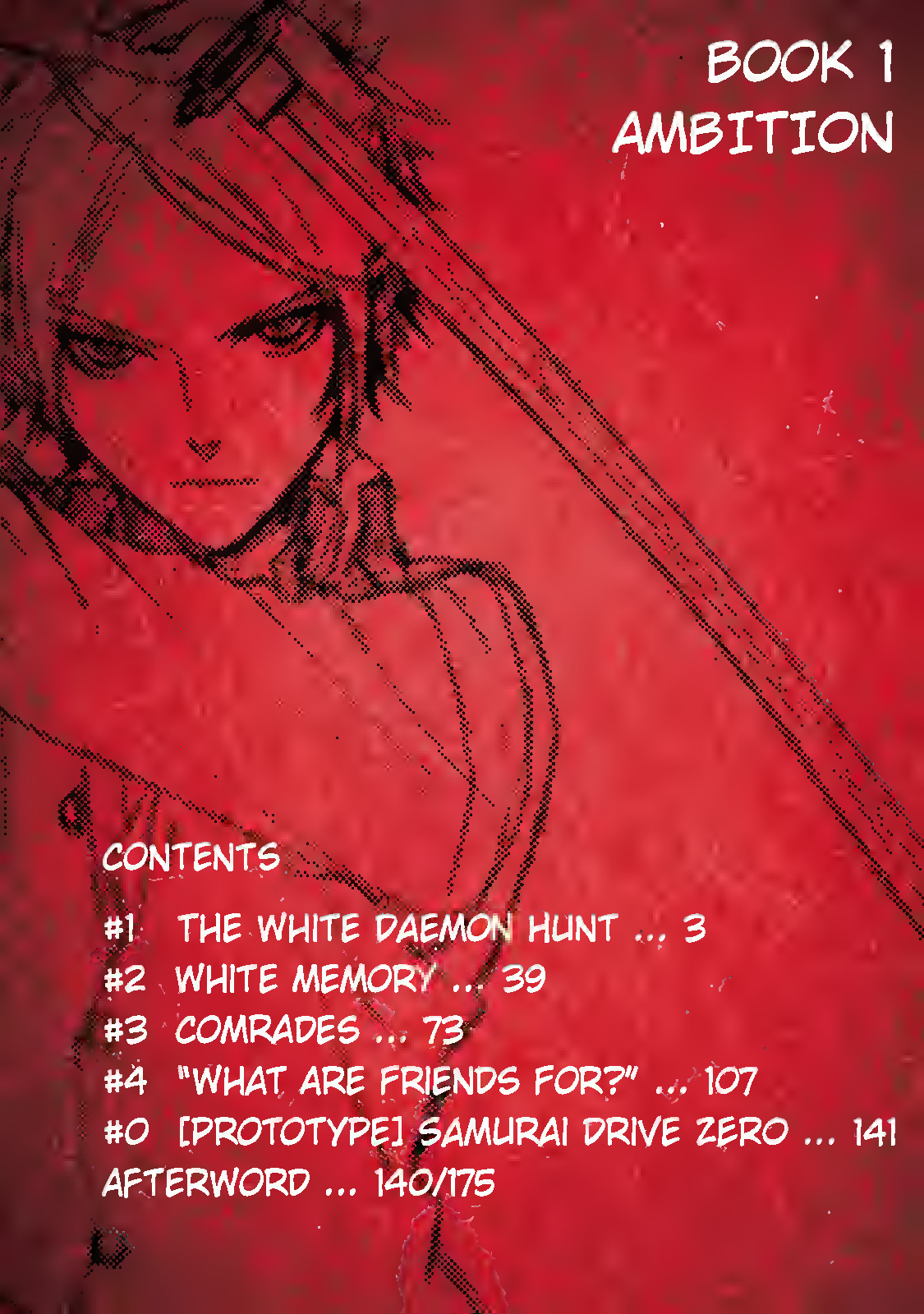
SAMURAI DRIVE

1

Fujiko Kosumi



SAMURAI DRIVE 1
FUJIKO KOSUMI



BOOK 1
AMBITION

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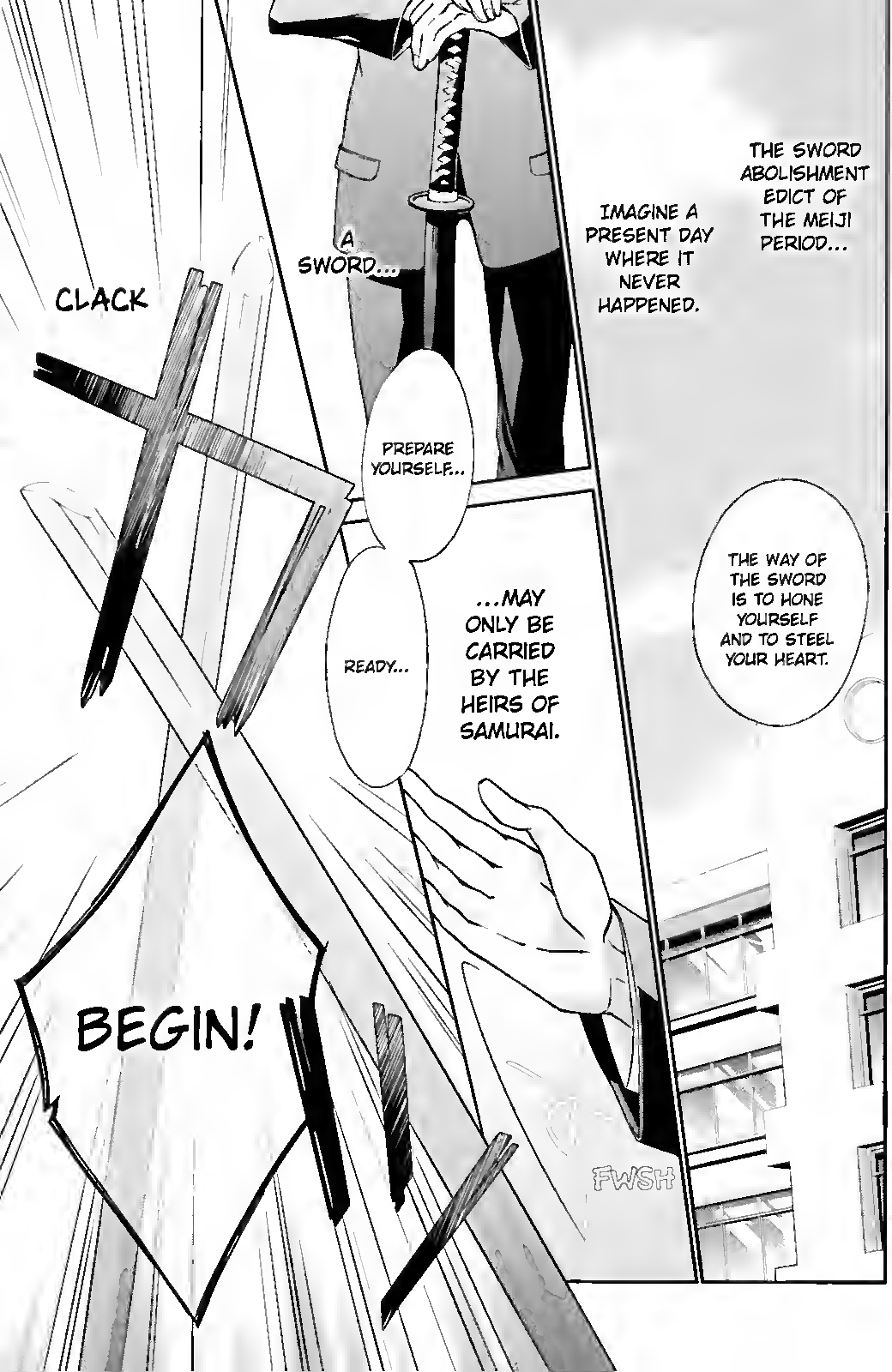
WAS THAT A FIGHT...?
HEY, HIS UNIFORM... HE'S FROM OUR SCHOOL. YIKES...
IT WAS ONLY AN INSTANT...
NEVER AGAIN.
#1: THE WHITE DAEMON HUNT
"THAT'S WHAT FIXED IT IN MY MEMORY.
IT SOUNDED LIKE A PLEA TO SOMEONE.
....
DESPITE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE...

SAMURAI DRIVE


THE SWORD ABOLISHMENT EDICT OF THE MEIJI PERIOD...
IMAGINE A PRESENT DAY WHERE IT NEVER HAPPENED.
A SWORD...
CLACK
PREPARE YOURSELF...
READY...
...MAY ONLY BE CARRIED BY THE HEIRS OF SAMURAI.
THE WAY OF THE SWORD IS TO HONE YOURSELF AND TO STEEL YOUR HEART.
BEGIN!
FWSH

TMP
IT WAS ONLY AN INSTANT.
OUT OF THE HUNDREDS OF US HERE...
IT'S THAT GUY FROM YESTERDAY.
HIS EXPRESSION WAS NOTHING LIKE IT WAS LAST NIGHT...
FOR THAT INSTANT...
I COULDN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.

TMP
IT WAS ONLY AN INSTANT.
OUT OF THE HUNDREDS OF US HERE...
IT'S THAT GUY FROM YESTERDAY.
HIS EXPRESSION WAS NOTHING LIKE IT WAS LAST NIGHT...

I COULDN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.
FOR THAT INSTANT...

PSST
PSST
PSST
HEY, DID YOU HEAR? THERE WAS ANOTHER SIGHTING.
PSST
YEAH, I HEARD.
THAT MYSTERIOUS SWORDSMAN WHO ATTACKS SWORD-BEARERS AFTER DARK, RIGHT?
PSST
I HEARD HE'S ALMOST SEVEN FEET TALL.
SERIOUSLY? WE'RE GETTING INTO URBAN LEGEND TERRITORY HERE.
HE'S REAL ENOUGH, THOUGH.
SOME FREAKISHLY STRONG DUDE WHO GOES AROUND THRASHING INNOCENT SWORDSMEN.
THEY CALL HIM THE WHITE DAEMON.
AND A FEW SWORDSMEN HAVE BEEN STANDING UP AGAINST HIM.
YEAH, THEY SAY SWORD-BEARERS ARE STARTING TO GATHER AROUND TOWN.
TWCCH
HEY!
SKRRCH
HA-K

I JUST REALIZED!
WH-WHAT'S UP, IBUKI?
THAT'S THE GUY FROM LAST NIGHT AND THIS MORNING.
IT'S HIM!
SNNRR
おおお
OHHHHHHHHHH
おお
I NEVER NOTICED!
AND HE'S ALWAYS ASLEEP!
HE SITS REAL CLOSE TO ME!
WHATEVER I SHOULD SAY HI, RIGHT NOW
SHAAKK
SHAAKK
HEY...
ERR
HEY! UMM...
UHH...
WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?
!
FWSH
OOF!

WHAT GIVES?
DON'T, MAN. THAT'S HARUMA KOKONOE.
?
SO?
LOOK, YOU JUST TRANSFERRED HERE, SO YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW. BUT HE'S REALLY WEIRD.
HE'S ALWAYS ALONE AND HE'S REAL COLD, EVEN WHEN YOU TALK TO HIM. NO ONE KNOWS WHO HE REALLY IS.
WHO'D WANT TO GO NEAR A GUY LIKE THAT? NO ONE.

THE RUMOR IS, HE'S ALWAYS GETTING INTO FIGHTS.
WITH SWORDSMEN!
OH, I SAW THAT LAST NIGHT.
SERIOUSLY ?!
WHOA
THEN IT'S TRUE! HE'S ANOTHER WHITE DAEMON HUNTER!
DON'T GO NEAR HIM OR YOU'LL GET HURT!
HUH?
WHEN YOU TELL ME TO STAY AWAY...
THAT JUST MAKES ME WANT TO KNOW MORE.
It's human nature.

NOW I REALLY CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.
HE'S AWAKE DURING CLASS.
HE'S GOT...
...A LOT OF WOUNDS.
HMM?
WHOAAA!
GLEEN
HOT PINK!
MORE AND MORE FASCINATING
MAYBE THE OTHERS DON'T KNOW.
PIT-A-PAT
OPEN YOUR TEXTBOOKS TO PAGE 36.
GASP
OH!
CRAP.
I FORGOT MY BOOK.
BLNKK
CLAKK
UH

....
BLINK
NO KIDDING ?!
NODD
CAN I?
UM... MIND IF WE SHARE?
OH...
....
BECAUSE I WANT TO SLEEP.
THANKS.
SCRATCH
MAYBE HE'S SECRETLY A NICE GUY.
THE END
BRRRRRR
ヒュオオ
オオ
オオオ
H-HEY, SO...YOU'RE ALWAYS SLEEPING...
MAYBE HE'LL OPEN UP.
WHY IS THAT?

HE DOESN'T GIVE CONTEXT TO ANYTHING HE SAYS!
I'M ACTUALLY IN THE SWORD-BEARING CLASS.
OH...MY TRANSFER, YOU MEAN?
?
WHY NOW?
BLSSH
NO REGRETS!
FEELING NO SHAME!
WHY?
I MIGHT AS WELL TRY IT OUT.
ONLY THE HEIRS OF SAMURAI ARE ALLOWED TO CARRY SWORDS.
THERE'S...
...A FEW THINGS I WANT TO DO.
....
OH.
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
HEY, WAIT A SEC! DID I JUST GET SHUT DOWN?!
KEEP IT DOWN. I'M LECTURING HERE.
CLASS...
....
WOW... HE'S ACTUALLY TALKING WITH HARUMA.
MRMRR
MRMRR...

SEE, TO ME...
BUT IT'S NOT THAT.
CHATTR
TRUTH IS, THERE'S NOT MUCH UPSIDE TO CARRYING A SWORD!
YOU KNOW THAT WHITE DAEMON GUY? OUTLAWS LIKE HIM MAKE IT HARDER FOR SWORDSMEN!
I'M NOT TRYING TO FLAUNT MY PRIVILEGE OR ANYTHING!
CHATTR
SILENT TREATMENT
....

I MUST UPHOLD A CODE OF HONESTY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.
THE SWORD IS A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY...
!

SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL HAS REALLY INTERESTING CLASSES.
LIKE THAT SAMPLE LINE ON THE BOARD
IT'S PRETTY DIFFERENT.
KINDA MADE MY HEART SKIP A BEAT.
MAYBE WE THINK ALIKE...!
S...
STILL...
T-THAT'S...
THE WORDS OF A FAMOUS SWORDSMAN.
FWSH
I WASN'T EXPECTING HIM TO QUOTE IT ALONG WITH ME.
WHOA
SORRY?
NEXT...
TWEET
NEXT...
...IS MUCH BETTER.

STOMMP
STOMMP
STOMMP
BOOM
VS
RSSTLE
RSSTLE
RSSTLE
?!
ALL RIGHT. TODAY IN PE: PHYSICAL TRAINING.
FORM TWO TEAMS AND GO AT IT LIKE A REAL BATTLE.
BOTH ARMIES, FIGHT TO WIN!
GET READY...
GET SET...

GO!
RAAAGH
おおおお

LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE STARTED.
GUH
...?!
OOF!
SMACK
IT CAN WAIT UNTIL THIS IS OVER!
RAAGH!
RAAGH!
RAAGH!
HUH?! WHAT ABOUT CLASS?!
Wait Are we sparring?
THIS IS OUR STANDARD WARMUP.
I WON'T MINCE WORDS: HARUMA IS EXTREMELY GOOD.
NO ONE CAN ACTUALLY BEAT HIM.
ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER AND IT TURNED INTO TRADITION FOR THE WHOLE CLASS TO GANG UP ON HIM.
NOTHING MATTERS BUT VICTORY!
I DON'T CARE!
CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT...
TEEHEE
YOU ACT LIKE IT'S NO BIG DEAL!
COME ON, YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS!
IT'S CHEATING!

SWOOSH
ARRRRH
HURGHT!
WHAKK
I WILL NOT CRY!
AIEEEE
NOT UNTIL I WIN!
ZOOM
AAAAH
AAAAH

KRAKK
CLIKK
UGH..
NOTE: IBUKI
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
FOOP
WSSH
ENOUGH!
I YIELD...
PLOP

HMM? WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?
!
SHEEN
SHEEN
TAA
I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF OF HIM!
HEY!
Ha ha ha.
LOOKS LIKE HARUMA WINS AGAIN TODAY.
HARUMA KOKONOE...
HE WAS HURT...
...BECAUSE OF ME.
....
I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF OF HIM...
MEAN
OH, THE STRAY FROM EARLIER..
WEASEL
THERE ARE STRAY WESASELS?!
WEAS-?!
IS IT HURT?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START!

I KNEW IT!
HE'S A NICE GUY.
NOT AT ALL LIKE THE RUMORS OR HOW HE SEEMED LAST NIGHT.
HEY... YOU WERE MUMBLING SOMETHING LAST NIGHT... WAS IT...?
NNNN
ARGHHH
GEEZ...! COME ON!!
WHAT'S WITH YOU?!
GASP
I JUST CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF OF YOU!
WAKE UP!
CAN'T.
CHRONIC SLEEPINESS
WHAT ?!
NODD
CRIPES, MAN. PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
RSSTLE
RSSTLE
HERE. WANT SOME OF THIS?
IT'S THE GUM THAT'S A HUNDRED ALARM CLOCKS ALL IN ONE- "SLEEP NO MORE"!
CHOMP
TOTALLY RECOMMENDED!
It really works!
SLEEPLESS GUM
ASK FOR IT BY NAME!
FLASH

WITH THIS...
TODAY...
WHAT IS THIS?
AMAZING.
I'M AWAKE.
DASH!
THAT WAS SUDDEN!
WHAT?! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
I CAN CLEAR IT.
CHRONIC SLEEPINESS.
SWORD-BEARERS ARE STARTING TO GATHER AROUND TOWN AT NIGHT.
DOES THIS MEAN...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!

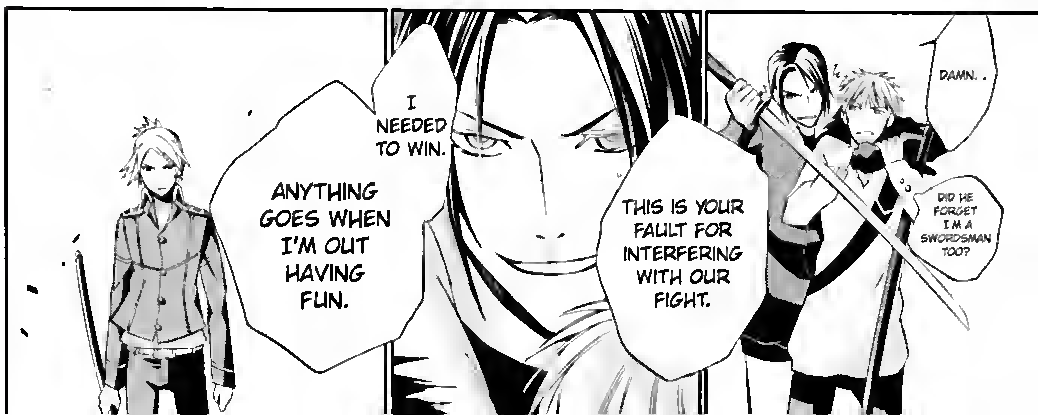
HARUMAAAAA!
HARUMA!
HE'S HUNTING THE WHITE DAEMON?!
THUDD
OW!
IT'S NO USE...
HMM? YOU A SWORD-BEARER TOO?
TRYING TO BE LIKE THE COOL KIDS AND HUNT THE WHITE DAEMON?
WATCH IT!
OH, UH, SORRY.
GEEZ. HE LOOKS LIKE A THUG.
THIS IS GOING SOUTH..
OH, THE BIG-SHOT SWORDSMAN SCHOOL? I HATE HOW THEY THINK THEY'RE ALL NOBLE AND CRAP.
HEY, HE'S WEARING A SHISEIKAN UNIFORM.
NO, NOT AT ALL.

SHEEN
I REALLY DON'T WANT TROUBLE!
SHUT UP AND DRAW!
YOU'RE JUST LOOKING FOR A FIGHT!
AHH!
CLIKK
WHAT A LIE!
I'M THE WHITE DAEMON.
I'LL FIGHT YOU, KID.
PSST
PSST
OH NO
WHAT ARE THEY THINKING, DRAWING THEIR SWORDS HERE?
THEY DON'T DESERVE TO BE CALLED SWORDSMEN
CLANG
CRAP!
THEY'RE PRETTY STRONG!
WHSSH
FWSH
SWISHH
PAY ATTENTION!

THUDD
BLEGH!
HARUMA ?!
WHY, YOU...!
WOBBLE
KOFF
AAAAAGH!
UGH...!
HARUMA!
CHIKK

THUDD
SWRRL
BLEGH!
CRAKK
SWSSH
WOW!
WHUDD
AND STRONG TOO! WHO IS THAT?
HE'S FAST!
PSST
PSST
THANKS, HARUMA!
I'M OKAY NOW!
WOW!
THAT KID DIDN'T EVEN DRAW HIS SWORD.

THROW DOWN YOUR SWORD.
HA HA HA! I GOT A HOSTAGE!
URGK.
WHAT THE...?!
HEY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE WHITE DAEMON!
WHY ARE YOU SO SUCH A DICK?!
SHUT THE HELL UP!
I'LL CUT YOU!


I NEEDED TO WIN.
ANYTHING GOES WHEN I'M OUT HAVING FUN.
THIS IS YOUR FAULT FOR INTERFERING WITH OUR FIGHT.
DAMN. .
DID HE FORGET I'M A SWORDSMAN TOO?

SLASSH
WHY SHOULDN'T I USE MY SWORD TO AMUSE MYSELF?!

SWSSH
KRASH
NIKK
BFFR
BEGONE.
YOU'RE NOT FIT TO BE CALLED A SWORDS-MAN.
YANK
CHIKK
COWARD.

CLAKK
CLAKK
CLAKK
HE'S LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON!
NOOO!
HARUMA!
THIS IS BAD!
ARE THESE HIS TRUE COLORS?
AT THIS RATE...
HE'S LIABLE TO...
KILL HIM...
HARUMA!

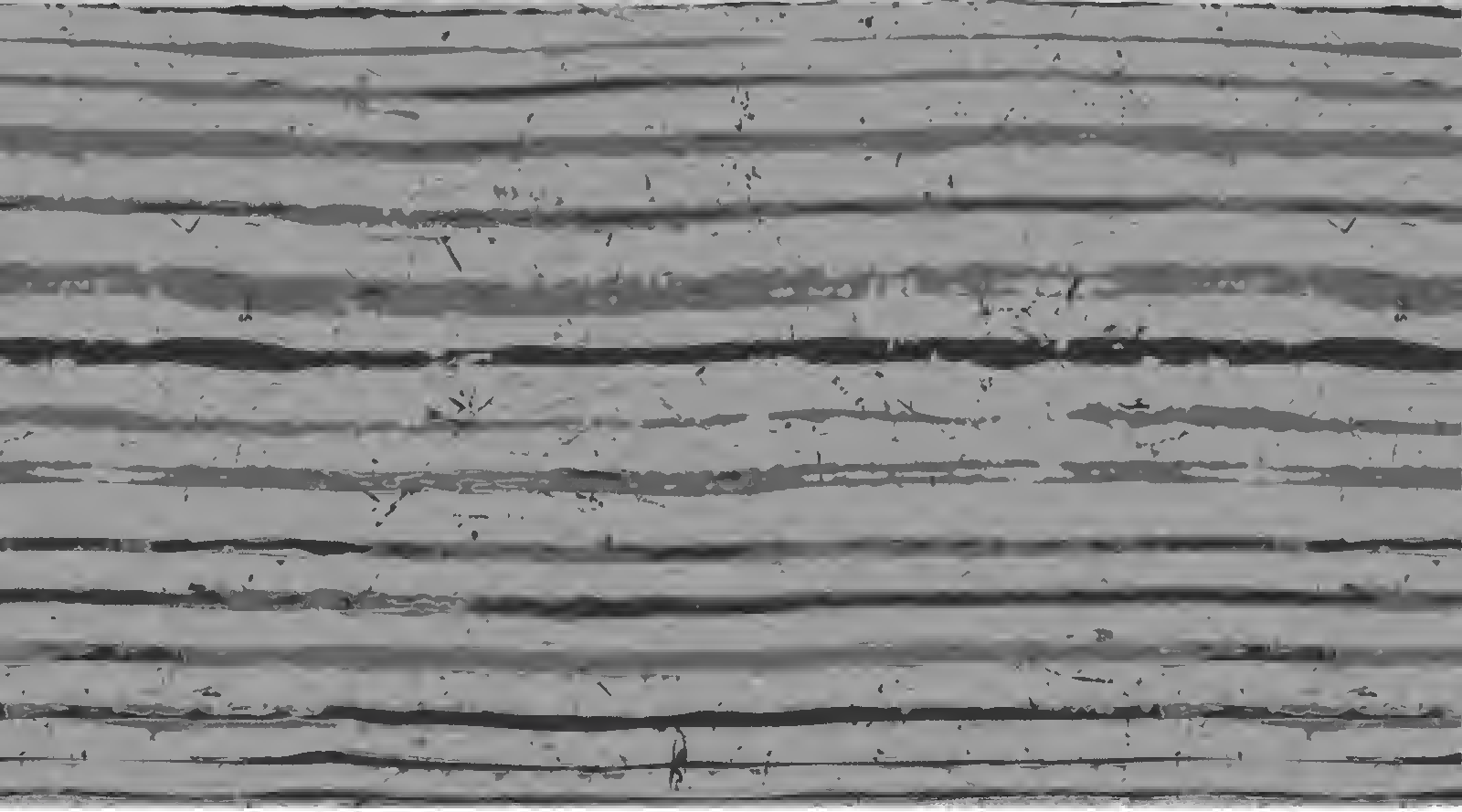
THE SWORD IS A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY.
THAT ISN'T...
KLANG
WHAT YOUR SWORD IS FOR!

WHAT A FREAK!
HE'S THE REAL WHITE DAEMON!
?!
HARUMA IS...
RUN!
!!
BUZZ
GASP
GASP

WHY...
WHY ARE YOU SWINGING YOUR SWORD AROUND HERE?
I DON'T MEAN TO SOUND PRETENTIOUS, BUT..
THAT'S NOT WHAT A SWORD IS FOR.
THE WARRING STATES AND THE RESTORATION ARE LONG PAST.
YOU KNOW WHY SWORDS STILL AREN'T ABOLISHED...
WE CARRY THEM TO PROTECT PEOPLE.
THE SWORD IS...
THE WHITE DAEMON ?!
A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY...
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF.
"TO PROTECT PEOPLE."
TELL ME...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
....
HEY...
WHAT'S THE WHOLE WHITE DAEMON ACT ABOUT?
WHAT THE...
IS "YOURSELF" INCLUDED IN "PEOPLE"?
....
VENGEANCE.

STMP
PPATT
NEVER AGAIN...
WILL I...
LET ANYONE TAKE ANYTHING FROM ME.
THAT WAS HARUMA KOKONOAE'S WISH...
BUT I WOULDN'T KNOW THE FULL MEANING OF IT FOR A LONG WHILE.
END



SAMURAI DRIVE CHARACTER PROFILES - PART 1

I TOOK HIS FIRST NAME FROM A CERTAIN PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE. I LIKED THE WAY IT SOUNDED, AND THAT ATHLETE WON, SO I TOOK THAT AS AN OMEN. CAN YOU GUESS WHO IT IS? HIS LAST NAME IS FROM ANOTHER FAVORITE ATHLETE.
HE'S A TOTAL LONER WHO'S NEVER HAD A SINGLE FRIEND IN HIS LIFE. HE'S REALLY GOOD AT AMUSING HIMSELF. GAMES ARE HIS FRIENDS. WHENEVER HE PLAYS GAMES, HE CONSISTENTLY NAMES THE PROTAGONIST "SHIRO." BUT HIS ONLINE FRIENDS' LIST IS STILL COMPLETELY EMPTY. IF YOU SEE HIM, PLEASE PLAY WITH HIM! (KIDDING!)

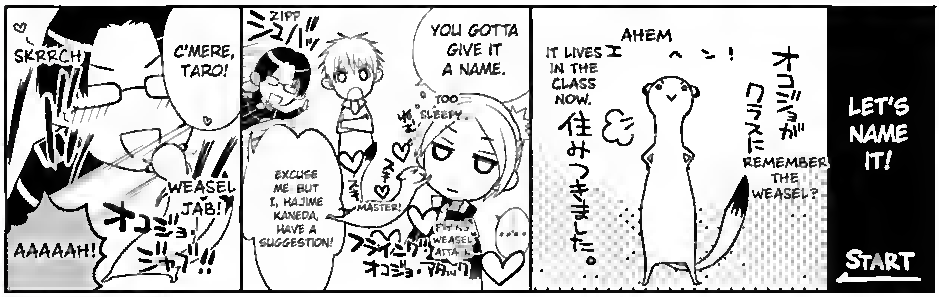
HARUMA KOKONOE

AGE: 16 YEARS OLD. 10TH GRADE IN HIGH SCHOOL.
HEIGHT: 168CM
HOBBIES/INTERESTS: VIDEO GAMES

↑ HIS CHARACTER DESIGN
WHEN I CREATE A CHARACTER, I LIKE TO DRAW THEM IN A SUPER DEFORMED STYLE. THAT'S HOW I COME UP WITH THEIR TRAITS

EPISODE #2: WHITE MEMORY

THE SWORD IS A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY.
DO NOT EVER FORGET...
...THE SWORD IN YOUR HEART.
HE ALWAYS SAID THAT WITH A SMILE...



TO BE CONTINUED

BUT HE...
はっ?!?
たたっ
SEISHIRO!

SPRNGG
BA-DUMP
HUFF/は
HUFF/は
HUFF
PHEW
SLUMMP
THAT BLISSFUL YET LOATHSOME DREAM...
THAT DREAM... AGAIN...
HEY! HARUMA!

URRK
No.
TAK.
. IYAMA?
IT'S TAKAHARA.
Try to remember.
LOOK AT YOU, KEEPING YOUR LUNCH OUT IN THE OPEN LIKE THAT...
I WAS WONDERING WHY YOU WEREN'T IN CLASS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? FIFTH PERIOD IS ALREADY OVER.
THERE YOU ARE!
Mascot lunchbox!
ベーーート...
DON'T HAVE ONE.
THAT'S A PRETTY LUNCHBOX YOUR MOTHER MADE YOU!
THAT'S...
FANCY AS ALWAYS!
Woooow
WONDER-LAND!
PFFT

HUH?
A MOTHER.
SHE'S DEAD.
PHEW
I DON'T HAVE...
ANYONE...
UMPF
PHEW
I DON'T FEEL AWAKE.
I HEAR NOISE AROUND HERE TOO.
D-DON'T PASS OUT AGAIN!
I'M REAL SORRY!
ULPP
HARUMA WAS NOT LISTENING!
MISTAKES WERE MADE!
SKRNGH
NO WAY!
UH...
SORRY! I WASN'T THINKING!
I MESSED UP!
UMFF
CHEER UP!
I SAID I'M SORRY!
I DON'T FEEL REFRESHED AT ALL...
REFRESHED
REFRESHED

GASP!
UMPF
GUM
IF I HAD THAT GUM...
IT WORKS.
HEY, HARUMA?
...EY.
IT WORKS
IT WORKS
ECHO
SERIOUSLY, ARE YOU OKAY?
REFRESHED ...?
SPEAKING OF WHICH,
HERE
IT'S THE ALARM-CLOCK GUM!
H...
Hold it!
HEY!
I'M GONNA GO GET REFRESHED.
TMP TMP
UGH
HARUMA.
DRRIP
SLAMM
URR...
URK
YOU'RE TOO CAPRICIOUS!
H-HEY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO PASS OUT!
URK

STUDENT UNION
購買部
SLEEP NO MORE?
I'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF YOU!
KOUBAI
購買。
Student Union
OH, THE GUM? WE'RE SOLD OUT.
Corner Store
コンビニ。
犬のマロン
IT'S REALLY POPULAR RIGHT NOW... Sorry
Candy Store
飴専門。。。
Excuse me?
SHLEEPY...?
YAY わい
SNORE?
YAY わい
....
GLOOM
CAN'T FIND ANY...
HARUMA LOOKS LIKE A MAN POSSESSED!
OH, HE'S BACK.
FINISH!
EEK!
SHEEN
NEED TO GET REFRESHED.
MMMBBL
EEK!
PSSST
WHAT IS THAT? IT'S CREEPY.
PSSST

GRIPP
SLAM
KRAK
STIKK
Ahhhh!!
RRK
SOMETHING'S LATCHED ON TO HARUMA!
STRPP
I WANTED TO SEE YOU! I WANTED TO SEE YOU! I WANTED TO SEE YOU!
YOU'RE...
YEAH! YOU SAVED ME THE OTHER DAY!
SWSSH
YOUR INJURIES...?
I'M FINE! TOTALLY FINE!
I BROUGHT A GIFT TO THANK YOU!
DRRAG
!
!

SLEEP NO MORE
CRASH
CRASH
THIS IS...
MY SAVIOR...!
救世主...!
KEEP IT COMING!
AHEM
AHEM
PLOP
PSSST
HE'S HAVING A CONVERSATION...
WITH THE WEASEL
THANKS FOR THE WARNING.
IBUKI, YOU GOTTA STOP GETTING INVOLVED WITH HIM.
HAHA
HARUMA CRACKS ME UP.
I TOLD YOU BEFORE HE'S WEIRD! IT'S DANGEROUS
WORSE THAN THAT, RUMOR HAS IT THAT HE GOES NUTS FROM TIME TO TIME, LIKE A SEIZURE.
YOU CAN'T GET THE TRUTH JUST FROM RUMORS.
BUT I'LL STICK TO WHAT I SEE AND HEAR FOR MYSELF.

PSSST
GAH!
I-IT'S GONE!
VENGEANCE.
BESIDES...
I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HE MEANT BY THAT.
SHEEN
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
WHAT?
What happened?
HIS STUFF IS GONE, I THINK.

DOFF
YEAH!
YEAH!
HEH OF COURSE NOT.
COME ON! ARE YOU GOING TO ACCUSE YOUR FRIENDS?
SWSSH
HEY HO!
HEAVE HO!
BANG
BONG
LISTEN.
DURING 5TH PERIOD, WE WERE OUTSIDE HOMEROOM AT OUR BLACKSMITHING CLASS.
BUT! ONE PERSON HERE WAS NOT PRESENT.
ZIP
THAT'S THE CULPRIT!
IT'S HIM...!
A-HA!
THE CULPRIT...
AAAHHH
IS...
I-IT'S THAT FOUR-EYED DETECTIVE, HAJIME KANEDA!
AMONG US!
おお
?

BA-DUMP
WOW
WOW
WOW
DIDST THOU STEAL IT, SIRRAH?!
THMPP
Eh?
HE'S ACTUALLY TALKING TO HIM!
THMMP
H... HEY THERE, HARUMA...
THMPP
FSST
Ugh
HARUMA?
THEN I GUESS WE CAN'T HELP IT
Y-YEAH
NO POINT LOOKING FOR TROUBLE
FSST
HE'S SO SCARED THAT HE'S TALKING FUNNY!
What a daredevil!
WOW
I THINK I'M IN LOVE!
THAT TAKES STONES, THOUGH! LET'S HELP HIM OUT!
YOU STOLE IT, RIGHT?
MMM?
NO.
DON'T LIE TO ME.
I DIDN'T.
I FEEL... SICK.
JUST ADMIT IT!
The jig is up!
UH-OH. THIS HAS TURNED INTO A WAY FOR THEM TO LET OFF STEAM...
THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT THE TRUTH ANYMORE
....

THEIR VOICES...
THIS ISN'T BECAUSE WE HOLD A GRUDGE OVER YOU BEATING US IN SWORDPLAY.
...GATHER IN A BIGGER WAVE...
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT!
IT GIVES THEM COURAGE.
IT WASN'T ME.
HAAA
WHAT'S THIS FEELING?
D...
DON'T LIE!
WHERE'S YOUR SWORDSMAN'S PRIDE?!
IT WASN'T ME.
TWITCH
OH, YEAH?!
WHETHER OR NOT...
Y-YOU GONNA FIGHT ABOUT IT?!
GRIP
SNIKK
IT'S TRUE.
KLKK
GOING RIGHT TO FORCE, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE GOOD. IT'S SICKENING.
YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE CALLED A SWORDSMAN. YOU NEED TO BE PUNISHED.
YOU KNOW WHY..

YOU'RE LIKE HIM!
THE LEGENDARY TRAITOR SWORDSMAN!
BA-DUMP
WE HAVE BREAKING NEWS
THERE'S AN UPROAR AT THE SCENE.

KEEP OUT KEEP OUT KEEP OUT
...IS ACCUSED OF KILLING AN INNOCENT CIVILIAN!
ER...
THE FAMOUS SWORDSMAN SEISHIRO SHINDO...
PSST
THESE SWORD-BEARERS ARE ALL THE SAME...
THE SUSPECT WAS FOUND MURDERED BY A SWORD...
KEEP OUT KEEP OUT KEEP OUT KEEP OUT

PSST
PSST
SWORDSMEN ARE NOTHING BUT A THREAT.
WE SHOULD BAN THE WHOLE CLASS...
SILENCE!
WHY WOULD OUR NOBLE MASTER DO SUCH A THING?
HE BETRAYED US!
NO!
LOOK AT SEISHIRO!
LOOK!
THAT'S A LIE!

WHY WON'T ANYONE BELIEVE HIM?
HARUMA, THE SWORD...
...IS A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY.
DON'T EVER FORGET THE SWORD IN YOUR HEART.
THAT WAS MY SEISHIRO ...
HARUMA, PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
HE WOULD...
NEVER DO SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
FACE REALITY.
WE WERE...
BETRAYED!
BAN THEM, I SAY...
IF EVEN A LIVING LEGEND COULD...
THERE'LL BE A CRACKDOWN ON SWORD-BEARERS NOW.
SWORDSMEN ARE GOOD FOR NOTHING.
THIS'LL PUT THE WIND IN THE ABOLISHMENT MOVEMENT'S SAILS...
HIS NAME SURE HAS BEEN STAINED ...

HE BETRAYED US!
YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FAMOUS SEISHIRO SHINDO, RIGHT?
LOOK AT THE TRUTH...
NO...
THE TRUTH ...!
GRIPP
SHUT UP!

THUDD
SNIFF

IBUKI?! WHAT THE HELL?!
いってぇ!!
THAT HURT!
YOU GUYS HAVE NO PROOF OF ANY OF THIS!
LEARN THE TRUTH...
BEFORE YOU ACCUSE ANYONE!
BESIDES...

HAAA!
YOU THINK HE'S...
WITH-IT ENOUGH TO LIE?!
Y-YOU'RE RIGHT!
ONCE WE DRAW, WE CAN'T BACK DOWN!
抜いたらひけるかよう。だって剣士だもん!
BECAUSE WE'RE SWORDSMEN!
THROBB
THROBB
B-BUT...!
ONCE WE DRAW THE SWORD, WE CAN'T PUT IT AWAY!
LOOK!
あ
GAH!
GRR
KRIPP
THROBB
UGH
HMPH
PUT THOSE SWORDS AWAY!
MAKES ME WONDER WHO HERE IS REALLY UNFIT TO BE CALLED A SWORDSMAN!

GRABB
S-STUPID?!
WHY ARE ALL YOU SWORDSMAN LIKE THIS?
YOU PICK UNNECESSARY FIGHTS FOR YOUR STUPID EGO!
YOU TAKE HUMAN LIFE TOO LIGHTLY!
STILL...
HERE.
T-THIS IS A...
BAMBOO PRACTICE SWORDS?
TAKE IT.
!!
WHOA!
PLOP
HERE.
THIS IS YOURS.
TAP
YOU MIGHT AS WELL.
!
AFTER ALL THIS, I'M SURE YOU CAN'T BACK DOWN EITHER, HARUMA.

GRINN
LET'S MAKE THIS FLASHY.
GOT IT?
HARUMA.
...!
BOOM
GRIPP
YOU'RE SIDING WITH HIM?!
I-IBUKI!

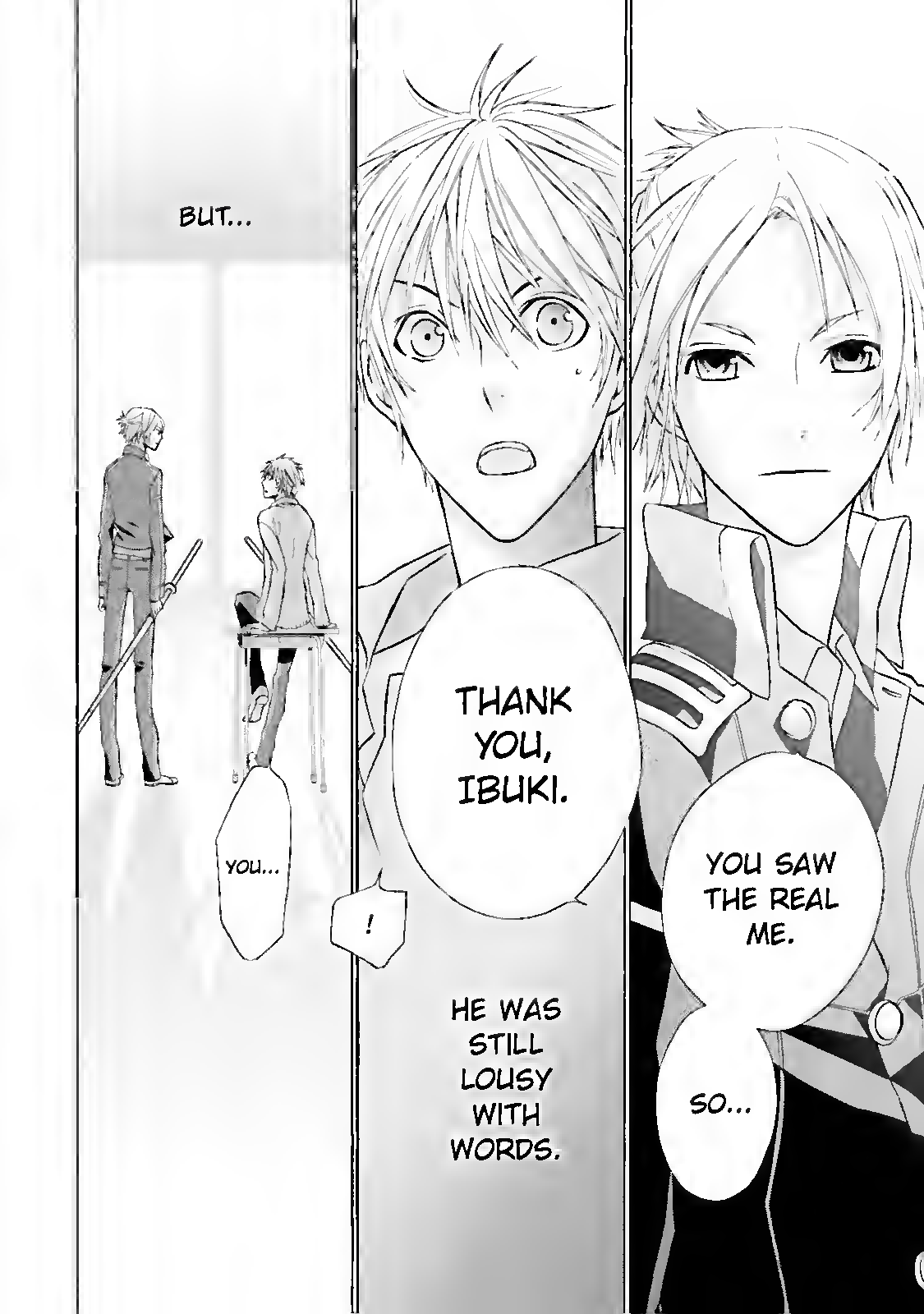
GRINN
PEACE!
PEACE!
SMAK
HE'S GOOD!
HE'S...

SMAK
THIS FEELING.
I'M FIGHTING WITH SUCH A CLEAR HEAD.
MY MIND IS CLEARING.
FRONTT
THIS...
SMAK
IS THAT REALLY IBUKI WITH HARUMA?!
えぇ!!
GÄH!
UH-OH!
おわぁ
あぁ
AHH HHH!
あぁ
THIS IS CRAZY!
WHAT'S WITH THEM?!
HOW DO THEY HAVE SUCH GOOD TEAMWORK?!

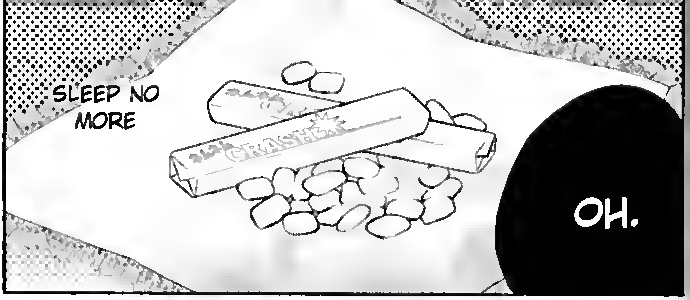
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I FELT THIS WAY?

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO.
ON THAT NIGHT, I MEAN.
I'M RELIEVED.
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
...?
YOU LOOKED LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON THEN.
BUT RIGHT NOW, YOU SEEM LIKE...
YOU'RE HAVING FUN.
FEELS MUCH BETTER, RIGHT?
GRINN

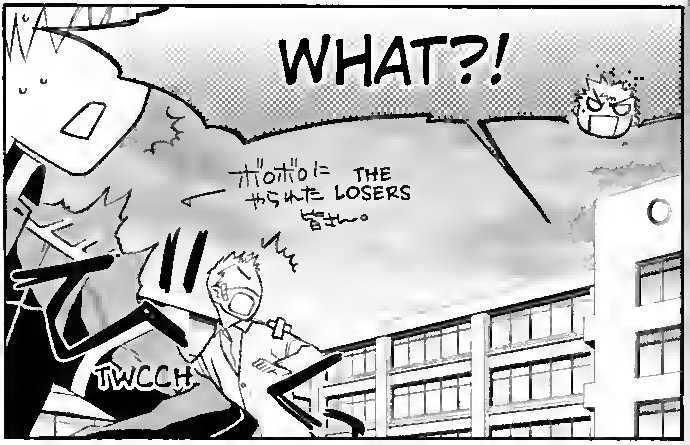
....
THAT GUM...
I NEVER NEEDED IT.
HE'S RIGHT.
IBUKI...
PHEW. THAT POST-VICTORY WIND FEELS GREAT.
YEP.
THANK YOU.
FEEL THAT WIND...
H-
HUH?!
SHOKK
AHH
W-WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?! YOU'RE THANKING ME NOW?!
DON'T! IT'S EMBARRASSING!
I WAS STEPPING IN YOUR BUSINESS!
AHH
IT'S NOT THAT.
NO.

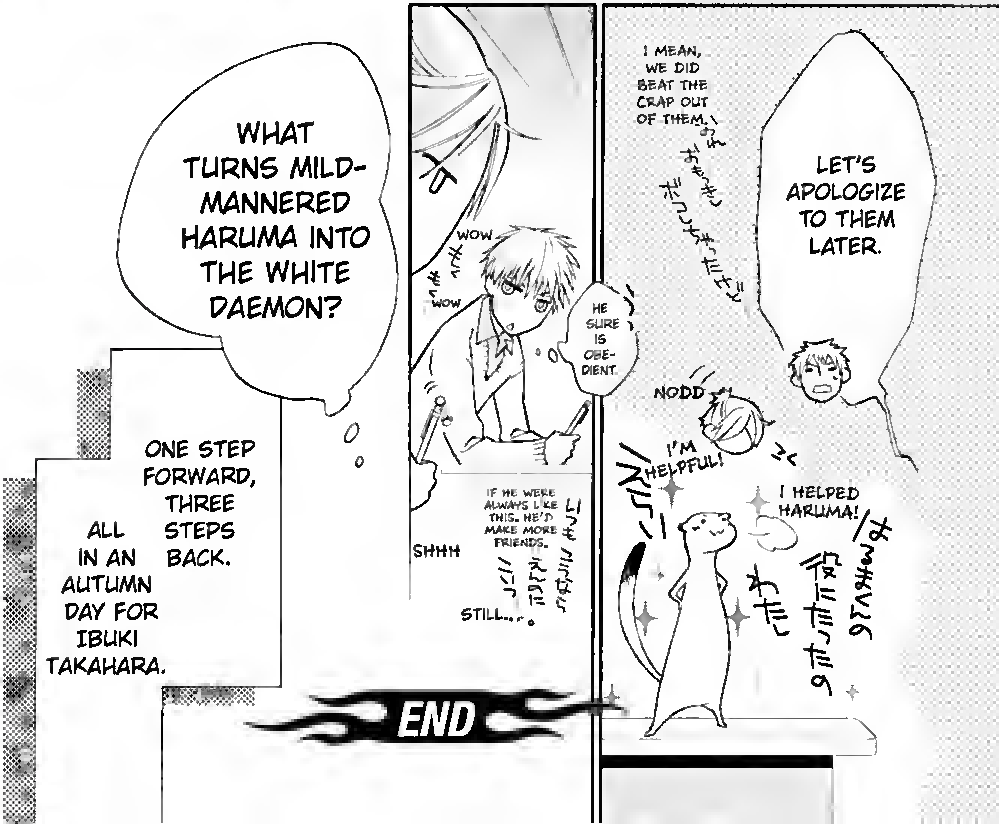

BUT...
YOU...
!
THANK YOU, IBUKI.
HE WAS STILL LOUSY WITH WORDS.
YOU SAW THE REAL ME.
SO...

...TO GET HIS FEELINGS ACROSS.
BUT HE'S TRYING...
Y-YEAH...
STILL...
WHY DO WE HAVE TO MAKE A WRITTEN APOLOGY?!
AND DID YOU HEAR WHAT THEY SAID WAS STOLEN?
THEY STARTED IT...
IT WAS GUM! GUM!
OF ALL THE THINGS!
GUM?
SCRTCH


SLEEP NO MORE
OH.

GUM?
KRUMBLE
KLNK
PLOP


WHAT?!
ボロボロに THE LOSERS
やられた 皆さん。
TWCCH


WHAT TURNS MILD-MANNERED HARUMA INTO THE WHITE DAEMON?
ALL IN AN AUTUMN DAY FOR IBUKI TAKAHARA.
ONE STEP FORWARD, THREE STEPS BACK.
WOW
WOW
HE SURE IS OBE-DIENT.
SHHH
IF HE WERE ALWAYS LIKE THIS, HE'D MAKE MORE FRIENDS.
STILL...
I MEAN, WE DID BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF THEM.
LET'S APOLOGIZE TO THEM LATER.
NODD
I'M HELPFUL!
I HELPED HARUMA!
END

SAMURAI DRIVE

SAMURAI DRIVE CHARACTER PROFILE - PART 2

IBUKI IS THE OPPOSITE OF HARUMA, AND ALWAYS ENERGETIC. BUT HE WISHES HE WERE COOLER. TOO BAD FOR HIM, THEN, THAT HE'S SO EMOTIONAL. HE HAS A PAIR OF YOUNGER SIBLINGS, A TWIN BROTHER AND SISTER, AND LOVES THEM TO DEATH, WHICH IS WHY HE'S GOOD AT TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE.

I TOOK IBUKI'S NAME FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE TOO: MY HOMETOWN. I SEE MT. IBUKI FROM MY FOLKS' HOME ALL THE TIME.

HE'S HIDING SOMETHING...

IBUKI TAKAHARA

AGE: 16 GRADE: 10TH GRADE IN HIGH SCHOOL.
HEIGHT: 172CM
SECRET SPOT: HIS BEDROOM CLOSET

EPISODE #3: COMRADES

TO BE CONTINUED

...I APOLOGIZE.
FOR THAT...
MY ATTITUDE...
UNFRIENDLY
TACITURN
GIVES PEOPLE THE WRONG IMPRESSION.
INDIFFERENT
SLEEPING
LINE
AND I THINK HE MEANS IT!
WELL, IT WAS PARTIALLY MY FAULT.
MUMBLE
HARUMA IS APOLOGIZING?!
BOW
FRIENDS?
WHEN I FIND OUT THE REASON...
FRIENDS, HUH...
GOOD JOB, EVERYONE.
HA HA...
F-FINE. BUT DON'T SNAP AGAIN LIKE YOU DID THE OTHER DAY, HARUMA.
...WHAT MAKES HARUMA SNAP LIKE THAT.
I MIGHT HAVE SOME IDEA...
NO PROMISES
WHY NOT?!
JUST SAY YOU WILL!
WE'RE JUST SIMPLE SWORDSMEN DOING OUR BEST TO SURVIVE IN A HARSH WORLD.
LET'S NOT FIGHT ANYMORE. LET'S BE FRIENDS. SHAKE HANDS, GUYS.
LET'S JOIN HANDS AND GET ALONG!

九重
KOKONOE
MAYBE THEN...
I CAN BE HIS FRIEND ...
IN THE TRUE SENSE OF THE WORD.
YUKARI.
THAT'S ...

YOU'RE GOING OUT TONIGHT AGAIN?
YEAH.
BUT THIS...
HARUMA...
AGAIN?
IT HAPPENED AGAIN?
DOWN WITH SWORD-BEARERS
GO AWAY
I ALREADY DECIDED...
...I WOULDN'T GIVE IN.
GO AWAY.
RIPP

TMP
SO...
WHY ARE YOU OUT THIS LATE?
OH, ABOUT THAT...
....
IF I DID...
I COULDN'T FACE MY BROTHER.
RSSTLE
I CAME OUT HERE TO CHECK.
YOU SHOULD HAVE LET ME...
WHAT?
SOMEONE'S BEEN SNOOPING AROUND AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT.
BOING
!
IT'S HIM!
HARUMA?!

HARUMA?
OUT OF THE WAY!
HARUMA?
OUT OF THE...?
I JUST WANT TO TALK.
DON'T MOVE.
FWSH
BOPP
SPLSSH
IBUKI!
RWLL
YOU'RE ...
!

HMM
SO...
BOOM
WHAT IS IT...
...YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
THAT'S MY LINE!
SEISHIRO SHINDO'S PLACE!
SHINDO DOJO
WHY ARE YOU ACTING ALL BOSSY?
ESPECIALLY HERE!
URK
I MEAN...
THIS IS...

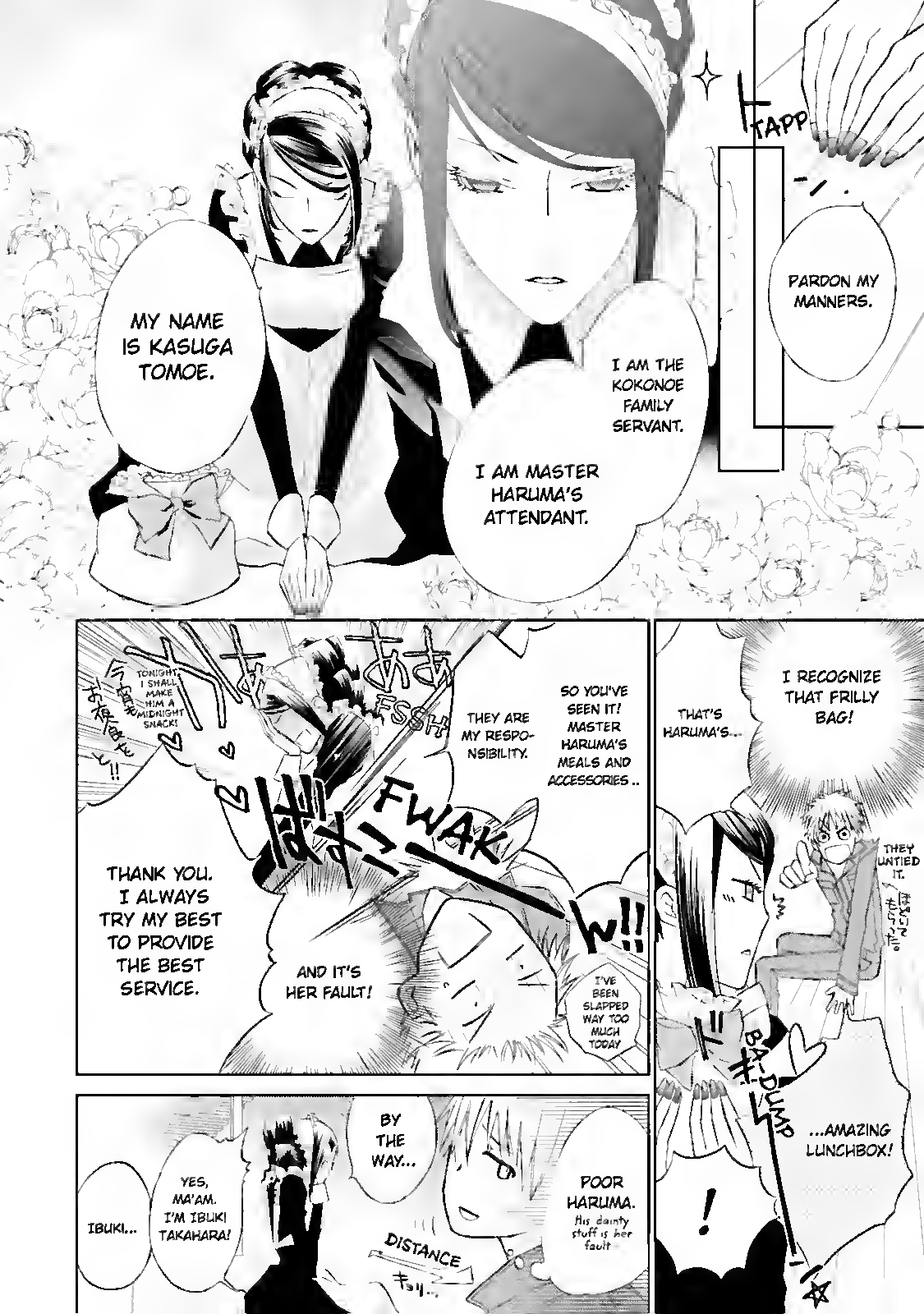
OH, THAT.
I LIVE NEXT DOOR.
I DIDN'T ASK YOU.
U-UM! HARUMA AND I ARE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS!
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU KNEW EACH OTHER.
IT'S BEEN DANGEROUS HERE, SO HE'S BEING MY BODYGUARD.
SORRY I HIT YOU.
U-UM... MY NAME'S-
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
CHATTR
...IS THE SCENE OF THAT INCIDENT.
AND WHERE WE'RE STANDING...
CHATTR
YOU'RE SEISHIRO SHINDO'S LITTLE SISTER, THE CURRENT MASTER OF THE SHINDO DOJO.
YOU DO?
CHATTR
THAT'S THE FIFTH WINDOW TODAY.
A NOTE TOO...
THAT WAS THEY GLASS BROKE A WINDOW.
TROTT
ROCK
DIE!
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
TROTT
WE GET HARASSED EVERY SINGLE DAY.
CHATTR
CRASH
THE ONE THAT CAUSED THE DOJO TO-
CHATTR

TWCCH
SEISHIRO SHINDO SOLD HIMSELF AS A HIGH-MINDED SWORDS-MAN.
HE MURDERED REGULAR PEOPLE AND DIED BY THE SWORD.
THERE'S NO GETTING AROUND IT.
KRMMPLE
GRIP!
BUT IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS...
EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT ...
PEOPLE ARE CRUEL TO MY BROTHER AND THE OTHER SWORDSMEN.
SHUT UP...
ORDINARY SOCIETY DENOUNCED HIM.
HIS FELLOW SWORDSMEN CONSIDERED HIM A TRAITOR.
IF ALL THAT IS TRUE...
...HE'S INDEFENSIBLE.
SHUT-UP!
TMMP
HARUMA!

SHUT UP!
GRIPP
SO YOU'LL KILL ME, DEPENDING ON MY ANSWER?
WHAT ARE YOU PLOTTING?!
WHO ARE YOU?
YOU COME HERE...
SNOOPING IN A STRANGER'S HOME...
... AND NOW YOU INSULT SEISHIRO.
I KNOW NOW.
WHAT GETS YOU WORKED UP..
MAKES YOU DRAW...
I KNOW.
SEE...
I WAS ASKING LEADING QUESTIONS...
BUT...
DAMN...
THIS IS GETTING EXCITING!
!
HEH..
HEH HEH..
I GET IT.
I GET IT NOW.
DROPP

I BELIEVE IN SEISHIRO SHINDO TOO.
THAT MAYBE WE'RE THE SAME.
THE SAME?
YOU'RE THE SAME, AREN'T YOU?
YOU QUOTE SEISHIRO...
YOU SNAP WHEN PEOPLE INSULT HIM...
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN I SAW YOU.
AS...
WE'RE TWO OF THE FEW PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN SEISHIRO.
...ME?

DROPP
おっ?!
Whoa!
THAT'S WHY..
WE ..
ARE...
PSSH
ゴキ
FRIENDS?!
FWSH
HEY!
WHAT THE...?!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
AT LEAST HELP ME UP FIRST!
WHO ARE YOU?!
WHAT WAS THAT?
YOU SEEM CONFUSED...
RLLL


TAPP
PARDON MY MANNERS.
I AM THE KOKONOE FAMILY SERVANT.
I AM MASTER HARUMA'S ATTENDANT.
MY NAME IS KASUGA TOMOE.
I RECOGNIZE THAT FRILLY BAG!
THAT'S HARUMA'S..
THEY UNTIED IT.
BA-DUMP
...AMAZING LUNCHBOX!
SO YOU'VE SEEN IT! MASTER HARUMA'S MEALS AND ACCESSORIES..
THEY ARE MY RESPONSIBILITY.
FSSH
TONIGHT, I SHALL MAKE HIM A MIDNIGHT SNACK!
FWAK
I'VE BEEN SLAPPED WAY TOO MUCH TODAY
AND IT'S HER FAULT!
THANK YOU. I ALWAYS TRY MY BEST TO PROVIDE THE BEST SERVICE.
POOR HARUMA.
His dainty stuff is her fault
BY THE WAY...
DISTANCE
YES, MA'AM. I'M IBUKI TAKAHARA!
IBUKI...

HUH?!
BRRR
WHY DO YOU ASK?
WE'RE FRIENDS.
WHAT..
IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER HARUMA?
!
YOU ANSWERED INSTANTLY.
I SEE.
AS A RESULT OF THIS AWKWARDNESS, HE HAD NO CLOSE FRIENDS.
MASTER HARUMA HAD..TROUBLE GETTING ALONG WITH THE FAMILY SINCE HE WAS SMALL, CAUSING HIM TO BE ISOLATED.
I KNEW IT..
しょんぼり
……。

HE WAS THE EMBODIMENT OF A "NOBLE SWORDSMAN." AND BECAUSE OF THE WAY HE DIED...
SOCIETY PULLED AN ABOUT-FACE, AND NO ONE BELIEVES IN HIM ANYMORE.
THOUGH MASTER HARUMA NEVER STOPPED BELIEVING IN HIM.
BECAUSE OF THAT, EVEN NOW...
SEISHIRO IS EVERYTHING TO MASTER HARUMA.
THE ONLY ONE HE OPENED UP TO WAS SEISHIRO.
HE HAS DEFIED THE COMMON VIEW OF SOCIETY ALL ALONE, UNTIL TODAY.
WHEN SUDDENLY YOU APPEARED.
俺?! ME?!

I...
I'M...
UH...
?!
I'M A SEISHIRO SHINDO FAN!
THAT'S ALL!
I ONLY STARTED COMING HERE BECAUSE I RESPECTED HIM.
OR A BUDDING STALKER
I'M LIKE A GROUPIE...
あはHA HA...
I DON'T HAVE A TRAGIC BACKSTORY LIKE HARUMA, BUT..
GROUPIE...?
EAVESDROPPING
きいてる。
ZINGG

WHEN I TRANSFERRED HERE FROM THE BOONIES, I VISITED THIS PLACE LIKE I ALWAYS DREAMED OF BUT WHEN I ARRIVED, IT WAS HORRIBLE.
THIS IS HORRIBLE!
ふざけんな!!
DIE
GET OUT
EVER SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN COMING HERE REGULARLY.
LIKE A PART TIME JOB?

RARE FOR A SHISEIKAN ATTENDEE, HUH? I'M A WORKING STUDENT.
THIS IS MY WORK UNIFORM...
SWORD-BEARERS ARE ALL DESCENDANTS OF SAMURAI.
SO MOST OF THEM ARE RICH LIKE THE KOKONOES.
AT THE GAS STATION.
BUT MY FAMILY IS DIFFERENT.

IN MY HEART I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE A SWORDSMAN.
BUT THEN...
I THOUGHT I COULDN'T BE ONE NO MATTER HOW MUCH I TRIED.
WHEN I WAS LITTLE, I TOOK THAT SERIOUSLY.
POOR PEOPLE WITHOUT SWORDS...
HAVE NO RIGHT TO BE SWORDSMEN.
I HEARD WHAT HE SAID.
<THE RIGHT TO BE A SWORDSMAN?
WHY, ANYONE CAN BECOME A SWORDSMAN.
AS LONG AS ONE HOLDS HONESTY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THEIR HEART, THEY ARE FIT TO CARRY A SWORD!
THOSE WORDS...
THEY SAVED ME.
THAT IS ALL.

SPRNGG
I TRUST HIM, JUST LIKE I TRUST HARUMA.
GRIPP
....
FWSH
?!
RMBBLE
RMBBLE
....
HUH? WHAT?
SINCE THEN...
I'VE TAKEN WHAT HE SAID TO HEART.
TO ME, SEISHIRO SHINDO IS MY SAVIOR AND MY TEACHER.
HARUMA.
RMBBLE
HARUMA
HARUMA.
YOU WERE RIGHT, HARUMA!
TAA!
!
YUKARI!
HARUMA!

THEY DO EXIST!
PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND SEISHIRO'S...
AND ARE WILLING TO TRUST HIM!
THERE ARE OTHERS BESIDES US!
YUKARI AND HARUMA...
THEY ARE BOTH TOO USED TO SOLITUDE TO OPEN UP EASILY TO OTHERS.
THEY JUST NEED A CHANCE.
REACH OUT
WITH AN OPEN HAND.
!
YOUR WILL IS LIKE THEIRS.
SO PLEASE...
...OPEN THEIR CLOSED HEARTS.
....

FWSH
NODD
THE FOOTSTEPS ARE AP-PROACH-ING.
HARUMA
THIS FEELING OF MY HEART...
...BEING THROWN INTO CHAOS.
HARUMA!
I'M OPENING THE DOOR.
NO.

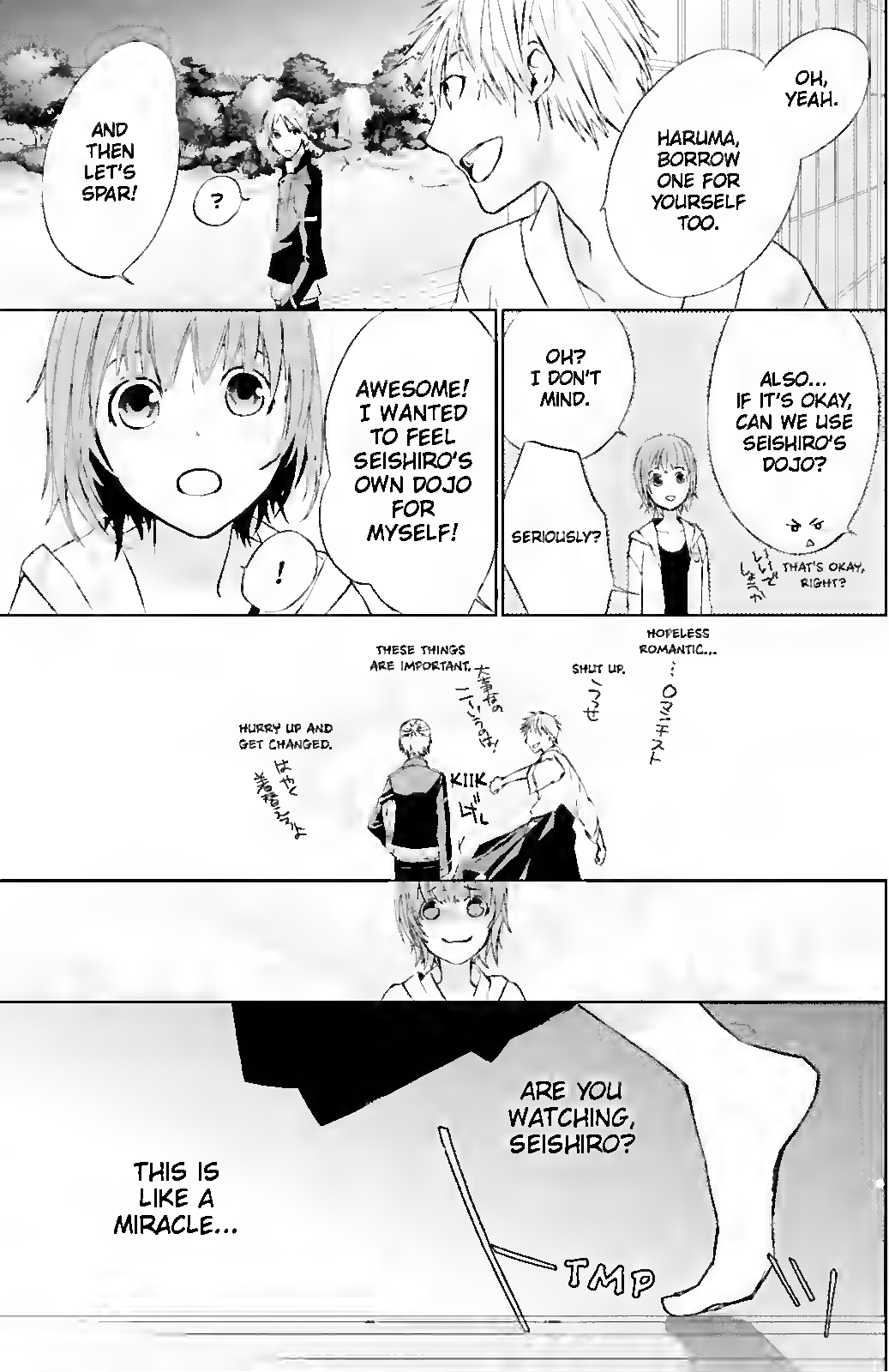
HARU...?
HSSHS
OW!
SLAM
NO!
I KNOW.
I'M PUSHING AWAY...
...SOMEONE WHO ALSO BELIEVES IN SEISHIRO.
I DON'T NEED ANYONE WHO TALKS LIKE THAT...
...ABOUT HIM.
!
I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID.
"GROUPIE."
I NEED ANYONE SHALLOW.
LIKEYOU.
Stalkers, either.
SNAPP
WHY, YOU...
SOMEONE
..WHO'S REACHING OUT TO ME..
....
HOPE?!
I'M WORRIED THAT THINGS MIGHT CHANGE.
HAH!
OH, REALLY?
SMAK
KRASH

SLAM
STOP BEING A COWARD!
WHY, YOU...
HOPE...?
ARE YOU SATISFIED KEEPING IT AS A MEMORY FOR YOURSELF?!
IS THAT ALL YOU WANT?!
OF COURSE NOT!
I KNOW...
WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE A DISCIPLE OF SEISHIRO'S?!

SMASH
...TO TELL ME!
I DON'T NEED YOU...
SEISHIRO IS ..
EVERYTHING TO ME!
OW!
I WILL FIND THE TRUTH...
ALL BY MYSELF!
EVEN IF IT TAKES MY WHOLE LIFE...
I'LL FIND THE MAN WHO TOOK HIM FROM ME!
TUGG
HEH!
YOU'RE WRONG...
HARUMA!

BOOM
WE WILL FIND THE TRUTH.
YOU MEAN "WE."
I THOUGHT...
"WE...?
HE WAS JUST SAYING WHATEVER SOUNDED GOOD...

BUT...
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT...
PARTNER.
HMM?
I'M SO SORRY.
A MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORM?
THAT'S THE ONLY MALE UNIFORM WE HAVE LEFT.
OUR PARENTS ALREADY PASSED AWAY...
RSTLE
WOW! THIS IS NICE!
HAVING BUDDIES LIKE THIS! A-A..
ACHOO!
YOUR CLOTHES ARE STILL WET.
I'M SO SORRY!
AHHH!
I'LL BRING YOU A CHANGE OF CLOTHES!
HEH...
HEH
HEH HEH!
I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS HALF BAD.
TWICCH
SHE WAS RIGHT THERE..
THAT'S A CREEPY WAY OF PUTTING IT.
TWICCH
W-WHAT?! THIS IS SEISHIRO SHINDO'S RAW UNIFORM?!
IT WAS MY BROTHER'S.


OH, YEAH.
HARUMA, BORROW ONE FOR YOURSELF TOO.
?
AND THEN LET'S SPAR!
ALSO... IF IT'S OKAY, CAN WE USE SEISHIRO'S DOJO?
THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?
OH? I DON'T MIND.
SERIOUSLY?
AWESOME! I WANTED TO FEEL SEISHIRO'S OWN DOJO FOR MYSELF!
!
HOPELESS ROMANTIC...
SHUT UP.
THESE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT.
HURRY UP AND GET CHANGED.
KIIK
ARE YOU WATCHING, SEISHIRO?
THIS IS LIKE A MIRACLE...
TMP

WITH THEIR INNER HEARTS POURING OUT...
I FELT...
FWSSH
THE CROSSED PLATINUM BLADES...
GRACEFUL AND STRONG...
THE UNCLOUDED HEARTS AND DANCE OF SWORDS...

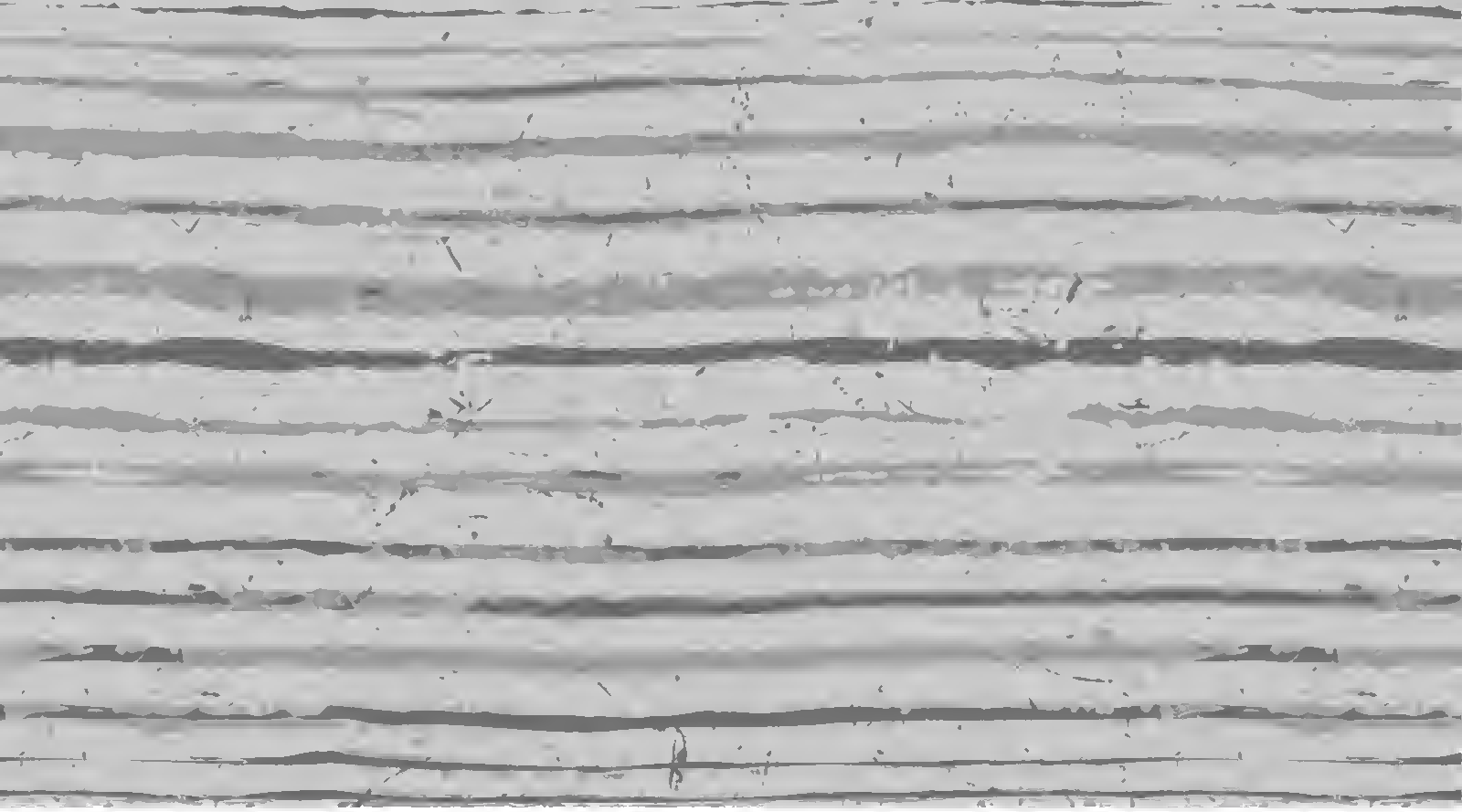
THE CROSSED PLATINUM BLADES...
GRACEFUL AND STRONG...
THE UNCLOUDED HEARTS AND DANCE OF SWORDS...

WITH THEIR INNER HEARTS POURING OUT...!
I FELT...
FWSSH

THAT SEISHIRO'S SWORD WAS THERE...
TRULY...

THANK YOU, BOTH OF YOU.
THIS MAKES ME SO HAPPY.
ARE YOU STILL COMING TO THIS LOATHSOME PLACE...
HARUMA?
KLIK
KLIK
KLIK

HUH? WHO'S THAT?
MASTER YUKINARI!
WHY ARE YOU STILL FIXATED ON THE SWORD?
THROW IT AWAY.
YUKINARI. .
MY BROTHER...
HUH?!
THE SWORD...
AND YOUR FOOLISH FANTASY OF SEISHIRO.
END



DON'T LET HER LOOKS FOOL YOU—SHE'S THE MASTER OF A DOJO, AND SHE'S GOOD WITH A SWORD. HER PARENTS ARE DEAD, BUT SHE GETS BY WITH THE INHERITANCE LEFT BY HER BROTHER.

SAMURAI DRIVE IS FULL OF MALE CHARACTERS, SO DRAWING YUKARI AND KASUGA IS LIKE AN OASIS. I GET TO DRAW A MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRL! IN A SAILOR UNIFORM! BUT I WASN'T HAPPY FOR LONG, BECAUSE SHE FIRST APPEARS AT NIGHT IN HER OWN CLOTHES. SO MUCH FOR MY DREAM. WHETHER IT'S MEN OR WOMEN, I LOVE UNIFORMS IN GENERAL.

YUKARI SHINDO

AGE: 14
GRADE: 8 IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
HEIGHT: 156CM
DAILY CHORE: CLEANING THE DOJO GATE

HARUMA CARES FOR HER AS IF SHE'S HIS OWN SISTER.

SAMURAI DRIVE CHARACTER PROFILE - PART 3

I STARTED WITH AN IMAGE OF A STRONG AND BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, BUT I KEPT GOING AND SHE ENDED UP PRETTY WEIRD. BUT THAT'S WHAT'S CHARMING ABOUT HER.

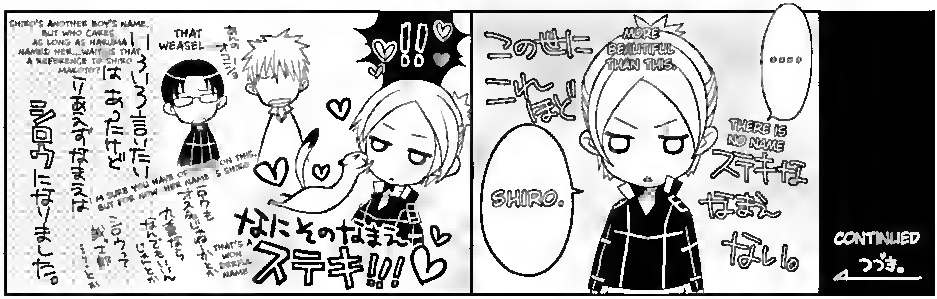
SHE STANDS OUT AMONG THE KOKONOE FAMILY'S MANY, MANY SERVANTS. SHE'S ACTUALLY A FORMER STREET GANG MEMBER. SHE'S VERY BRAVE AND ALSO VERY KIND.

KASUGA TOMOE

AGE: (REDACTED)
MAIDSERVANT.
HEIGHT: 172CM
PREFERENCES: FRILLS AND LACE

EPISODE #4: "WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?"

SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
THIS IS SUDDEN...
LET'S JUST GO MEET HIM.
SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL, SECOND-YEAR STUDENT, JIN SAITO.
THERE'S A VERY GOOD REASON FOR THIS.
GRR


CHIKO'S ANOTHER BOY'S NAME. BUT WHO CARES. AS LONG AS HINUMA MARRIES HER...WAIT IS THAT A REFERENCE TO CHIKO MARRYING?
THAT WEASEL
I'M SURE YOU HATE IT, BUT IT'S NOW HER NAME'S SHIKO.
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT. BEDDIE NAME
なにそのなまえ!! ステキ!!!
この世に二人ほど
MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THIS.
THERE IS NO NAME ステキななまえなしo
SHIRO.
CONTINUED つづき。

THE END

IT'S BECAUSE YOUR PRECIOUS KEEPSAKE SWORD OF SEISHIRO...
WAS TAKEN FROM YOU!
THIS HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.
THIS IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET YOU TO COME.
IS THIS REVENGE FOR LAST TIME?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
I DON'T WANT...
TO SEE HIM.
BESIDES, WHAT USE IS THERE?
WHY BOTHER?
WHY..
YOU...
URK
BA-DUMP
UGH
DON'T YOU GET HOW SERIOUS THE SITUATION IS?!
AND WHY YOU'RE UNARMED RIGHT NOW?!

THROW IT AWAY.
THE SWORD...
AND YOUR FOOLISH FANTASY OF SEISHIRO.
I WON'T LET ANY-ONE.
INSULT SEISHIRO. NOT EVEN YOU.
KLIK
KLIK
!
KLIK
MY FOOLISH BROTHER...
TUGG
!

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?
YOUR MOTHER
AND YOUR PRECIOUS SEISHIRO DIED BY THE SWORD.
UGH
HARUMA!
OW
I'LL HOLD ONTO THIS.
KRAK
....
I SEE BY YOUR FACE THAT YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND.
GIVE IT BACK!
HAA!
KLASP
AGH!

MASTER HARUMA!
HARUMA!
WHSSH
FLOP
...!
WHUMP
TOMOE. TAKE HARUMA BACK TO THE MANSION.
SNIKK
....
JIN SAITO.
!
HUH
WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
....
WHAT'S GOING ON?

HER VOICE WAS SO SOLEMN...
HE KNOWS EVERYTHING.
PAY A VISIT TO SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL.
SECOND-YEAR STUDENT, JIN SAITO.
THE SWORD IS A SWORDSMAN'S SOUL.
EVEN MORE SO IF IT'S A MEMENTO OF SEISHIRO.
THAT'S WHY I WILL TAKE IT BACK.
AT ANY COST.
THEN WHY DO YOU REFUSE TO COME WITH ME TO ASK FOR HELP?
I don't get you
HEY, IBUKI.
AND HARUMA.
RUSSLE
DID YOU HAVE LUNCH?
DURING LUNCH TIME
RUSSLE

WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
....
WHAT. KIND OF FREAKY GAME IS THIS?
UMM...
WHY?
EVERYBODY AT SHISEIKAN KNOWS HIM!
LOTS OF PEOPLE LOOK UP TO HIM!
R-REALLY?
IS THERE A PROBLEM?
PFFT
WHAT?! JIN?!
WE'RE GOING TO MEET SOMEONE CALLED JIN SAITO.
TAKE US WITH YOU!
PSST
ISN'T THAT GREAT, HARUMA?!
WOW, THAT SOUNDS AMAZING.
HE'S THE STRONGEST SECOND-YEAR STUDENT. PEOPLE CALL HIM THE DEMON GOD!
NOODGE
YOU KNOW HIM, HARUMA?!
?!

THIS IS... MY PROBLEM.
IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT!
WHAT ?!
C...
COME ON! WE'RE CLASSMATES, RIGHT?!
PWSSH
WE'RE NOT GOING THERE TO PLAY!
Back off, groupies!
NOT GOING.
PWSSH
I DON'T HAVE TO... ...GET ANYONE'S HELP.
I ALWAYS HAVE. I'LL SOLVE IT ON MY OWN.
HARUMA...
RWRCH

SLAP
SHUT THE HELL UP.
BUMP
BESIDES...
I'M ALREADY INVOLVED.
I CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE NOW.
SHOCK
SLAPPED AGAIN
YOU'RE BEING A BRAT. THAT WAS THEN THIS IS NOW
UHH...
WHAT'S GOING ON? ARE THEY IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING?
YOU SHOULD TAKE ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET.
BEING STUBBORN HERE WON'T HELP YOU GET BACK WHAT'S YOURS!
....
PSST
PSST

SERIZAWA?
ISN'T THAT SERIZAWA? THEY SAY HE'S THE STRONGEST SENIOR!
EHH?
LOOKS LIKE IT.
SAITO ?!
WHOA!
A BOLD ATTACK AGAINST SHISEIKAN'S BEST!
WHSSH
DIE!
SAITO!
?!
INSTANT KNOCK OUT!
WHOA!
NO ONE CAN STAND IN SERIZAWA'S WAY.
Look at that.
DEAD
HE'LL BE A CHALLENGE EVEN FOR SAITO...
OH!
HE STOPPED IT!

KRAK
HE KICKED HIM!
蹴った!!

PHEW
THAT WAS CLOSE.
I-IBUKI! IBUKI!!
HE'S THE ONE!
SORRY.
YOU OKAY?
JIN SAITO: STRONGEST OF THE SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS

I'M REAL SORRY ABOUT THAT.
GETTING YOU INVOLVED, I MEAN.
-A TEA- ROOM?
茶室?
BLINK

I'M JIN SAITO.
BOW
THIS IS HIDEHITO SHIKIMORI.
HE'S MY PARTNER.
ちなみに茶室はオレらのかくれ家
THIS TEAROOM'S KIND OF OUR HIDEOUT
WOW!
みよ!
HE'S PART OF SEISHIRO'S GROUP TOO!
I KNEW IT!
やっぱり!
THIS IS A GOOD SIGN!
一ノ瀬は心強い!!
NICE TO MEET YOU.
SHAKE
SHAKE
YEAH! SO YOU'RE IBUKI, HUH? GOOD TO MEET YOU!
HE'S REALLY OUTGOING.
What a nice guy!
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE, HARUMA.
....
SHHH!
HEY! YOU'RE BEING RUDE!
He's an upperclassman!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. HE'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS.
HUH?
ALWAYS?
JIN AND HARUMA ARE FELLOW DISCIPLES.
THEY'RE BOTH STUDENTS OF SEISHIRO SHINDO.
SWISSH
SWISSH
SWISSH
!

STILL...
WHAPP
HARUMA ONLY EVER OPENED UP TO SEISHIRO!
SO ANNOYING
I KNOW HOW FUNNY HE CAN BE!
HERE YOU GO
IT MAY NOT BE MUCH...
HE'S DEFINITELY THE KIND HARUMA ISN'T GOOD AT DEALING WITH!
BY THE WAY, HARUMA.
I'M STARTING TO SEE WHY HARUMA WAS SO RELUCTANT TO COME HERE.
DID I HEAR...
SOMEONE TOOK YOUR SWORD?
FWAP
DON'T BE LIKE THAT.
YUKINARI...
YOUR BROTHER...
HE'S FINALLY MAKING HIS MOVE.
....

WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
!
UM, WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
"FINALLY"?
HMM? OH, I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO EXPLAIN.
WELL...
WELL, UM..
I...
I DON'T KNOW I SHOULD HEAR THIS. I'M AN OUTSIDER.
I MEAN...
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THIS, SO I CAN HELP.
BUT I THOUGHT I SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT THESE INSIDER DETAILS
I might be too late

DON'T WORRY. IF THE INFORMATION WERE TOO SENSITIVE, HARUMA WOULD HAVE ALREADY STOPPED ME...
By force.
EEEEK
....
HA!
?!
WHAT IS IT?!
THOUGHT MAYBE THERE WAS SOMETHING!
HARUMA REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO COME HERE!
NOTHING! SO THAT'S IT! WHAT A GUY!
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU HEARD FROM KASUGA.
SHE TRUSTED YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE.

YUKINARI KOKONOE.
HE'S HARUMA'S OLDER BROTHER.
BUT HE'S ALSO SEISHIRO'S BEST FRIEND SINCE CHILDHOOD.
WHAT?!
BUT EVER SINCE THE INCIDENT...
WELL... THERE ARE A BUNCH REASONS.
BUT IT MADE YUKINARI HATE SWORDS, AND HATE SEISHIRO EVEN MORE.
...?
THE NAME "KOKONOE" DOESN'T SEEM FAMILIAR TO YOU AS A SWORDSMAN?
HARUMA'S FAMILY OPPOSES US SWORD-BEARERS...
THE KOKONOE FAMILY ARE RADICAL SWORD ABOLITIONISTS.
?!

BUT...
RUMBBLE
HARUM'S FAMILY...
ARE ABOLI-TIONISTS?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YOU GUYS!
Hey!
YOU WERE EAVESDROPPING!
I...
I WANTED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH SAITO!
No fair that you guys get to go!
NEVER MIND THAT.
GULP
THIS IS BAD.
THESE GUYS ARE SWORDS-MEN TO THE BONE...
YOU'RE A SWORD ABOLI-TIONIST?

I'M DEEPLY MOVED!
GRIPP
THEY MIGHT START A FIGHT...
That's a real tearjerker!
HE'S CARRYING A SWORD AGAINST HIS FAMILY'S WISHES!
COME ON!
AAAAGH
OH...
WHAT?!
HE'S GOT BIG DREAMS.
EVEN WE CAN TELL.
THE FACT THAT HE'S AT THIS SCHOOL PROVES THAT HE WANTS TO STAY A SWORDSMAN.
OUR WHOLE SOCIETY IS HEADED TOWARD ABOLITION.
W...
WE KNOW BETTER THAN TO SAY THAT!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ALL LIKE, "DOWN WITH THE ABOLITIONISTS"?
THAT'S KIND OF CREEPY!
A COUPLE DAYS AGO YOU WOULD HAVE PICKED A FIGHT!

A SWORDSMAN CAN'T STAY QUIET WITH HIS SWORD TAKEN AWAY.
IF YOU NEED HELP TO GET IT BACK, WE'RE MORE THAN WILLING.
REECH
YOU GUYS...
....
All right!
YOU GOT NICE FRIENDS!
I LIKE THAT SPIRIT!
BUT.
STOMPP
I CAN'T ALLOW... EAVES-DROPPING HERE.

RUN
WE'RE SORRY!
W...
ER...
OH...
HIS FACE
THEY DON'T CALL HIM THE DEMON GOD FOR NOTHING.
NOW THEN...
THAT BRINGS US TO THE MAIN SUBJECT.
HARUMA...
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WHEN YOU GET YOUR SWORD BACK?
WHAT ARE YOU USING IT FOR?
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE STILL THINKING OF AVENGING THE MURDER OF SEISHIRO.
OF COURSE.

HE WAS BEST SHOT TH, VING N ALLY!
有力助っ人のアテが…
NO WAY...
YOU'RE KIDDING...
REVENGE...
WHAT ?!
HUH?
THEN I CAN'T HELP YOU.
I THOUGHT SO.
ALL YOU GET IS A CHAIN OF TRAGEDY.
BESIDES...
IT COMES BACK TO YOU.
WHEN YOU PURSUE IT,
RIGHT NOW...
THERE'S MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED.
LOOK AROUND AT YOUR OWN SITUATION MORE.
YOU SHOULDN'T GET TRAPPED IN THE PAST.

SAITO...
....
MORE IMPORTANT THAN SEISHIRO?
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?
BESIDES...
NOTHING'S MORE IMPORTANT.
EVER SINCE THEN...
AFTER SEISHIRO DIED...
YOU SAID IT WAS DONE.
AND YOU NEVER LOOKED BACK.
YOU DON'T CARE IF TRUTH IS REVEALED.
BUT I CAN'T...
DO THAT.

SEISHIRO'S PROBLEM IS MY PROBLEM.
I DON'T NEED ANYONE'S HELP.
ESPECIALLY NOT FROM YOU.
DEEP DOWN, HARUMA KNOWS WHAT YOU MEAN.
HE HATES ME. BUT THAT'S NO SURPRISE.
HEY! おい
WAIT! まてよ
HE'S JUST AN AWKWARD KID.
Ha ha はは
YEAH.
NOT THAT HE'D EVER LISTEN. ロクに口もきかねえし
BUT HE'S STILL STUBBORN ABOUT IT.
THAT KID'S GOT AN IRON WILL IN HIM.
HE ALWAYS DID. 昔からな

HE'LL CHARGE STRAIGHT AT THEM.
BUT WHOEVER KILLED SEISHIRO IS A GIFTED SWORDSMAN.
IF ALL HE HAS IS SEISHIRO, THAT'S ALL HE CAN THINK ABOUT.
YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE LIKE THAT ONCE HE FINDS HIS TARGET?
NOW ME, I DON'T WANT SEISHIRO'S REPUTATION TO STAY SULLIED.
....
HE WAS MY TEACHER AND ALSO MY FRIEND.
THE REASON HARUMA'S SO FIXATED ON SEISHIRO ...
...IS BECAUSE HE'S AWKWARD AND TOO KIND.
HE CAN'T FORGIVE INJUSTICE. HE HAS TO PROTECT THE WEAK.
JUST LIKE SEISHIRO.

FOR SEISHIRO'S SAKE TOO.
HE MUST LIVE.
BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHY...
FORTUNATELY, HE HAS PEOPLE GATHERING AROUND HIM.
IT CAN'T BE ME.
OR KASUGA.
WHAT HE NEEDS NOW ARE FRIENDS THAT TO EXTEND A HELPING HAND.
...FOR HARUMA TO CHANGE.
MAYBE IT'S TIME...

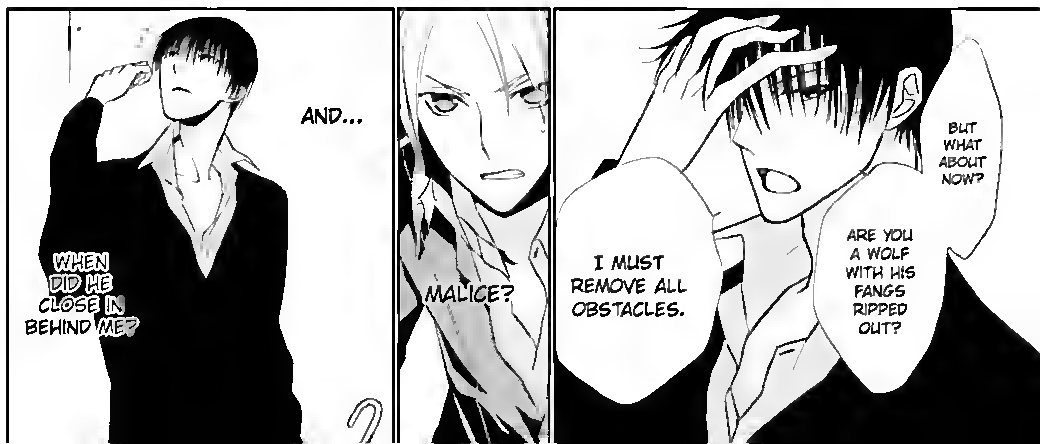
SOMETHING I NEVER HAD...
...AND IS AROUND ME NOW.
"RIGHT NOW, THERE'S MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED."
SOMETHING BOTHERS ME ABOUT WHAT HE SAID.
LOOK AROUND.
PSST
HEY. WAS JIN MAD?
HEY, IT'S A MATTER OF WHETHER WE CAN STILL WALK AROUND IN PUBLIC TOMORROW
YOU WAITED FOR ME JUST TO SAY THAT?
"LOOK AROUND AT YOUR OWN SITUATION."
YOU MEAN "WE."
WE'LL HELP
WHAT'S THIS SURGE?
I CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE NOW.

I NEVER KNEW THIS WHEN I WAS ALONE.
は.
GASP
....
NOTHING
TO EXPRESS
ARE HARD
EMOTIONS
HAS NEVER HAD FRIENDS
I FEEL LIKE MY INSIDES ARE BURNING UP
MY HEART ... IT'S RACING.
TWIDDLE
SQUIRRM
TWIDDLE
HARUMA?
What's he squirming like that for?
...? WE'RE GOING AHEAD.
HURRY AND CATCH UP LATER.
COULD HAVE THIS MUCH POWER.
ASIDE FROM SEISHIRO'S
I DIDN'T KNOW WORDS
HMM, LOOK AT THE SKY. MAYBE WE SHOULD RUN.
ISN'T LUNCH HOUR OVER?
BUT...
IT'S NEW!
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT IS IMPORTANT.
IF THAT IS WHAT JIN MEANT...

"GO MAKE FRIENDS."
IS THAT WHAT HE MEANT?
BRR
OH!
HE JUST WENT AHEAD.
WHY AM I SURPRISED?
WHERE'S IBUKI?
KRUNCH
THIS IS TERRIBLE.
HOW WRETCHED.

YES, HARUMA
I WAS WATCHING ALL ALONG ...
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
I CAN'T LOSE YOU HERE.
FOR MY SAKE.
I HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT THAT.
WAS WHAT YOU FELT JUST NOW LONESOME-NESS?
URRM

I HAVE HEARD THE ROAR OF YOUR SOUL.
JABBER
YOU KEPT YOURSELF ABOVE THE RABBLE, YET SUFFERED MANY TRIBULATIONS TO FIGHT FOR SOMETHING
JIBBER
STILL NOT UNDERSTANDING
WHO IS HE?!
A CLASS-MATE?!
BOOM
SINCE ENTEREING SHISEIKAN, YOU HAVE RADIATED A BRILLIANCE NO OTHER HUMANS DO.
DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL?


AND...
WHEN DID HE CLOSE IN BEHIND ME?
MALICE?
I MUST REMOVE ALL OBSTACLES.
ARE YOU A WOLF WITH HIS FANGS RIPPED OUT?
BUT WHAT ABOUT NOW?

USE THIS.
!
FSSH
IT'S STARTED RAINING.
DRIP
DRIP
BEING DRENCHED IN THE RAIN IS BEAUTIFUL...
WHO...
ARE YOU?
SOME MAY SAY SO, BUT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN BEAUTY OTHER THAN THE GLIMMER OF A HUMAN SOUL.

MY NAME IS SENSHU SUGATANI.
STAY BEAUTIFUL AS YOU STRUGGLE, HARUMA KOKONOE.
I HOPE YOU CONTINUE TO SHINE, EVEN IF YOU MUST SACRIFICE SOMETHING.
MY HEART ooo
IS POUNDING...
FOR MY SAKE.
END

I CREATED THIS CHARACTER EVEN BEFORE HARUMA, THE MAIN CHARACTER. AT THE OUTSET, WHEN I WAS TALKING ABOUT *SAMURAI DRIVE* WITH MY EDITOR, JIN AND HIDEHITO WRE GOING TO BE THE MAIN CHARACTERS. THEY'RE STILL A DUO AS A REMNANT OF THAT VERSION. JIN'S GOOD AT LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE, BUT HE'S A BIT OVERBEARING, SO HARUMA AVOIDS HIM. I WONDER WHEN HE'LL MANAGE TO BREAK HARUMA.

JIN SAITO

AGE: 17. GRADE: 11 IN HIGH SCHOOL. HEIGHT. 180CM UNLIKELY QUALITY: QUITE GOOD AT CALLIGRAPHY

SAMURAI DRIVE CHARACTER PROFILE - PART 4

MY FAVORITE FEATURES ARE GLASSES AND SHORT HAIR, AND THIS CHARACTER HAS IT ALL. HE'S A NICE GUY WITH A TASTE FOR FINE TEA AND FLOWERS. HE'S A CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF JIN'S AND IS THE ONE OF THE FEW SERIOUS-MINDED CHARACTERS. HE'S SO SERIOUS THAT IT'S AWKWARD AT TIMES. YOU KNOW WHAT I JUST REALIZED? *SAMURAI DRIVE* IS FILLED WITH AWKWARD PEOPLE...

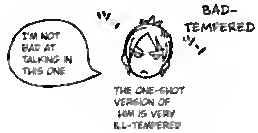
I THINK HE'S THE ONE CHARACTER THAT HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL FROM THE ONE-SHOT COMIC.

HIDEHITO SHIKIMORI

AGE 17 GRADE 11 IN HIGH SCHOOL HEIGHT: 182CM POSITION USUALLY THREE STEPS BEHIND JIN

THE STORY OF "SAMURAI DRIVE 00"

STARTING ON THE NEXT PAGE IS THE ONE-SHOT COMIC PUBLISHED BEFORE *SAMURAI DRIVE* WAS SERIALIZED. THE CHARACTER PERSONALITIES AND WORLD DETAILS ARE DIFFERENT IN SOME WAYS. HARUMA IS ALMOST A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CHARACTER. IT MIGHT BE FUN FOR READERS TO COMPARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS AND THE MAIN STORY.



EPISODE #0: SAMURAI DRIVE ZERO

ON THE NUMEROUS ASSAULTS BY SWORD-BEARERS THE PAST FEW DAYS...
....
BREAKING NEWS
PSST PSST
AFTER THE MEIJI RESTO-RATION...
THE SWORD ABOLISH-MENT EDICT DID NOT GO INTO EFFECT.
PSST PSST
ONLY DESCENDANTS OF SAMURAI WERE ALLOWED TO CARRY SWORDS. AS THE MODERN AGE DAWNED...
PSST PSST
SWORD-BEARER MORALITY IS IN QUESTION
ANOTHER SWORD-BEARER STUNT?
THERE'S SO MANY RECENTLY
THOUGHT-LESS SWORD-BEARERS COMMIT CRIMES,
RESULTING IN SUPPORT FOR THE ABOLITION OF SWORDS.
AMONG THEM...
WE SHOULD BAN SWORDS ALREADY.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THE WAY OF THE SWORD TO BE THE WAY OF TRUTH.

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
THE WORLD OF THE SWORD THAT KILLED HIM!
IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS.
I SEE...
IT DISGUSTS ME JUST TO LOOK AT THEM.
YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED A SWORD SINCE THEN?
BUT NOW YOU DETEST THE WORLD OF THE SWORD, AND HAVE CLOSED YOUR HEART TO IT.
HARUMA, YOU MOURNED MY SON...

....
THAT IS NOT WHAT MY SON WOULD HAVE WANTED.
CLUNK
TAKE THIS.
トーン
...!
IT WAS MY SON'S LAST WISH.
HE WANTED YOU TO HAVE IT.
SEISHIRO...
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THIS...
AND SEE THE WORLD MY SON DID.

I WANT YOU TO BELIEVE IN...
...THE WORLD THAT MY SON LOVED.
CRUNCH
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
BUT IF THIS IS IT...
THE WORLD THAT SEISHIRO LOVED...
SHISEIKAN
SHISEIKAN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
CLICK
YOU WANT ME TO LOVE SOMETHING THAT KILLED YOU?
I'LL SEE IT FOR MYSELF!

CLASS ONE
SINCERITY
WE HAVE A TRANSFER STUDENT TODAY.
HIS NAME IS HARUMA KOKONOE.
HIS ENROLLED IN THIS SWORDS-MANSHIP SCHOOL TO LEARN THE WAY OF THE SWORD.
PSST
HEY, LOOK AT HIS SWORD
PSST
WOW, IT LOOKS STRONG.
PSST
I HOPE YOU ALL BECOME FRIENDLY RIVALS TO BETTER YOURSELVES.

SINCERITY, MY ASS.
THINKING IT'S BEING SOME SUCH
...HEY, NEWBIE!
HMPH.
THEY'RE FULL OF IT...
A MONUMENT ... TO ... "SINCERITY."

?!
SWISH
KRAK
YOU'RE GOOD!
NOT BAD!
WSSSH
GRRRK
WHAT THE...?!
GRRRK
GRRRK
WHAT ?!
GASP
BA-DUMP
FWAP
COME WITH ME!
?!
OH!?
OH!?
I'M INTERESTED IN YOUR HIPS!
MY HIPS?!
All right! Let's go!
CLASSP
GRIPP
HA HA HA
BUUP
SWISH
ALL RIGHT! YOU PASS!
!
I LIKE YOUR EYES AND YOUR REFLEXES!

健剛実質
SIMPLICITY AND FORTITUDE
WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM? HE SEEMS DANGEROUS!
Wow.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
I HEARD ABOUT A TRANSFER STUDENT WITH A NICE SWORD AT HIS HIP!
I COULDN'T HELP IT.
NEVER HEARD ANYONE CALL THEMSELVES THE STRONGEST.
BOW
I'M JIN SAITO, STRONGEST OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS.
HE'S HIDEHITO SHIKIMORI.
HE'S STRONG TOO. SECOND ONLY TO ME IN OUR CLASS.
LET ME OFFER YOU SOME TEA AS AN APOLOGY.
UH...
HARUMA
THAT'S RIGHT. HARUMA!
SO THAT'S WHAT HE MEANT BY "HIPS."
TWICCH
SEISHIRO SHINDO.
HOLD IT.
BYE.
BUT I'M DONE HERE.
DON'T RUN AWAY. I WON'T BITE.
THANKS.
かしゃ
TMP

YOU KNOW?
OF COURSE! ANYONE WHO KNOWS EVEN A LITTLE OF THE WAY OF THE SWORD WOULD RECOGNIZE IT.
SEISHIRO SHINDO IS KNOWN AS A SWORDSMAN AMONG SWORDSMEN.
YOUR SWORD... IS THE SAME ONE SHINDO USED.
THE SWORD HE USED IS LEGENDARY IN ITS OWN RIGHT.
HE WAS CALLED THE PRODIGY OF OUR TIME.
CHALLENGE ME, HUH?
YOU SHOULD UNDER-STAND.
TWINK
IF YOU'RE ALSO A SWORDS-MAN...
EVERY-ONE WILL WANT TO CHALLENGE HIM.
AND IF THERE'S A GUY WITH SUCH A FAMOUS SWORD AT HIS SIDE...

HEH
POP
YOU SWORDS-MEN ARE ALL THE SAME.
!
SO YOU KILL PEOPLE TO GET YOUR KICKS.
THAT'S WHO YOU ARE.
SNIKK
BUT WHETHER OR NOT I'M LIKE THAT...
YOU TALK BIG.
FWSH
BY MY SWORD!
YOU CAN JUDGE-

SMAK
WHAT THE...?!
SKITTR
WHOA!
HARUMA!
THE THING EARLIER WAS A FLUKE?!
PSST
PSST
LET'S GO TAKE A LOOK.
JIN'S JUST TOO GOOD!
REALLY?
THE TRANSFER STUDENT WITH THE LEGENDARY SWORD LOST TO THE STRONGEST SECOND YEAR STUDENT.
HEY, DID YOU HEAR?
PSST

NURSE'S OFFICE
保健室
PSSKY
PSST
PSST
ぶすうう
A NOVICE.
YOU WERE A NOVICE.
HUMPF
みうちゃ!!。。。
WHY WOULD A NOVICE WITH THE SWORD COME HERE?
WHAT'S WITH THE WALK OF SHAME?
なあにこの羞恥プレイ…。
A LITTLE DISINFECTANT SHOULD DO IT.
EVEN IF YOU ARE A SWORD-BEARER, IT'S NOT A SCHOOL YOU SHOULD ATTEND ON A WHIM.
SO WHY...?
THIS IS ONE OF THE VERY FEW REMAINING SCHOOLS OF THE SWORD
....
LIKE YOU CARE...
I DO CARE.

THE WAY OF THE SWORD IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.
IN THIS DAY AND AGE WHEN ABOLITION COULD BECOME A REALITY...
WE HAVE ALL GATHERED HERE TO MASTER THE WAY OF THE SWORD.
THIS IS NOT A PLACE FOR THE WEAK.
YOU COULD DIE.

A STRONG SWORDSMAN.
I WANT TO CONTINUE TO BE...
STRONG OR WEAK? IS THAT ALL THERE IS TO THIS WORLD?
IS THIS WHAT YOU DIED FOR, SEISHIRO?
THE WORLD YOU LOVED...
GRIPP
CREAK
GRIPP
HE LOVED THE SWORD AND DIED BY THE SWORD.
IS A MEMENTO OF MY DEAREST FRIEND.
MMPH
THIS SWORD...
...IS THIS STUPID?

WELCOME, COMRADE!
GET STRONGER FOR YOUR FRIEND'S SAKE!
AHHHH
OUTSIDE TOO?!
WHEN DID YOU ALL GET IN HERE?
WE'RE ALL SUCKERS FOR TALK ABOUT JUSTICE AND BONDS...
I CAN'T DO IT...
おおo!!

YOU IDIOT...
DON'T CRY!
...LIKE THE SELFISH PEOPLE THEY ARE.
YOU EITHER!
I THOUGHT THEY ONLY CARED ABOUT BEING STRENGTH OR WEAKNESS...
SNIFF
WHAT'S WITH THESE GUYS?
...ARE THEY CRYING?
DON'T GET IT..
I...
AHHHH
WHY...
!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.
TAP?
KLSSK
IGNORED
無視...

BESIDES, SEISHIRO WOULD BE SAD TO SEE SUCH AN AMATEUR CARRY IT.
THAT SWORD'S A LITTLE TOO DANGEROUS FOR YOU TO WIELD CASUALLY.
HIDEHITO IS RIGHT.
ONLY THE STRONGEST SHOULD HAVE THAT.
JUST LIVE LIKE THE REGULAR GUYS...
YOU'RE ALL THE SAME...
LIKE GAMES OR WHATEVER.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER THINGS YOU CAN ENTERTAIN YOURSELF WITH.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORCE YOURSELF TO CARRY A SWORD.

ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS BEING STRONG OR WEAK!
...THAT SEISHIRO DIED!
IT'S BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU...
FWSH
I DON'T NEED IT.
HEY, WAIT!
LET ME GIVE YOU MY CELL NUMBER IN CASE SOMETHING HAPPENS...
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH
....
IT'S OKAY.
CLICK
HOO BOY...
PHEW
....

SEISHIRO SHINDO WAS MURDERED BY AN AMBUSH OF LOWLY RUFFIANS, I HEAR.
I KNOW. IT'S TERRIBLE FOR THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND.
IT REALLY HURTS.
I'M SURE HE HATES SWORDS...
HE MUST HAVE COME TO SEE THE WORLD THAT HIS BEST FRIENDLOVED...
MAYBE THAT CAME OUT WRONG.
I'M BAD AT EXPLAINING...
DEATHLY WRONG, I'M AFRAID.
YOU'RE ALWAYS TOO BLUNT!
...THE TRUE WORLD OF THE SWORD.
HMM
THAT'S BRAVE OF HIM.
THAT MAKES ME WANT TO SHOW HIM...
BESIDES, DON'T YOU THINK HE'LL MAKE A GOOD SWORDSMAN?
ESPECIALLY IF HE'S THAT STRAIGHT-EDGED.
BEEM
SO THAT'S YOUR TRUE AGENDA.
COME ON!
A DEAR LITTLE UNDER-CLASSMAN IS CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT TO DO!
WE GOTTA HELP HIM!
IT'S BOTH! I'M AFTER BOTH!
HA HA HA
FWAP
FWAP
FWAP
....

JOKES ASIDE...
WITH SUCH A FAMOUS SWORD AND THE SHINDO NAME, PEOPLE WILL DEFINITELY COME AFTER HIM.
THAT'LL BE TROUBLE...
FOR SURE.
WHAT THEY SAID MEANT NOTHING
THEY'RE JUST SWORDSMEN, FIXATED ON NOTHING BUT STRENGTH.
BUT...
"THAT SWORD IS THE PROOF OF YOUR BOND WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND!"
"SEISHIRO WOULD BE SAD."
DAMM-IT...
I DON'T GET IT...
BAMM
HEY, THERE. THE FAMOUS TRANSFER STUDENT.

SMASH
?!
KRACK
CLACK
GRAB
!
KRSSH
WHAT...?! I CAN'T... BREATHE...
HEH. THANKS A BUNCH.
I'LL BE TAKING THIS.
KOFF
THE STRONGEST OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS? IT'S THE SAME UNIFORM. .
DON'T TAKE IT PERSON-ALLY.
HA HA HA!
THIS IS NICE.
THIS SWORD WILL SHOULDER THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD.
FITTING FOR THE STRONGEST OF THE THIRD YEARS.
KOFF
GIVE...
...IT BACK!
HOW COULD THIS BE THE STRONGEST OF THE STUDENTS IN THIRD YEAR?

STILL CHEATING, I SEE.
FWIP
GRRR
!!
JIN SAITO!
WHAT IS HE...?
MIND IF I JOIN IN?
SQUEECH
OR WAS I HEARING THINGS?
DID YOU SAY YOU'LL SHOULDER THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD?

HAH!
THIS WON'T GO THE SAME WAY AS LAST TIME!
FLIP
BEEP
RING
?!
!
WHO
CLICK
TMP

HAH
AS LONG AS I HAVE THIS, I CAN CALL MYSELF THE STRONGEST.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS CHEATING IN THE WORLD OF THE SWORD.
THIS IS WAY MORE THAN JUST CHEATING.
MY HAT'S OFF TO YOU.
YOU REALLY DON'T CHANGE, DO YOU?
I JUST HAVE TO BE STRONG!
SNIKK
I JUST HAVE TO WIN!
THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!
!
ARGHH

STRENGTH!
STRENGTH!
STRENGTH!
THAT'S ALL YOU SWORDS-MEN TALK ABOUT!
IT'S BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU THAT SEISHIRO...!
YOU'RE THE WORST!
I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO SEE THIS ROTTEN WORLD!

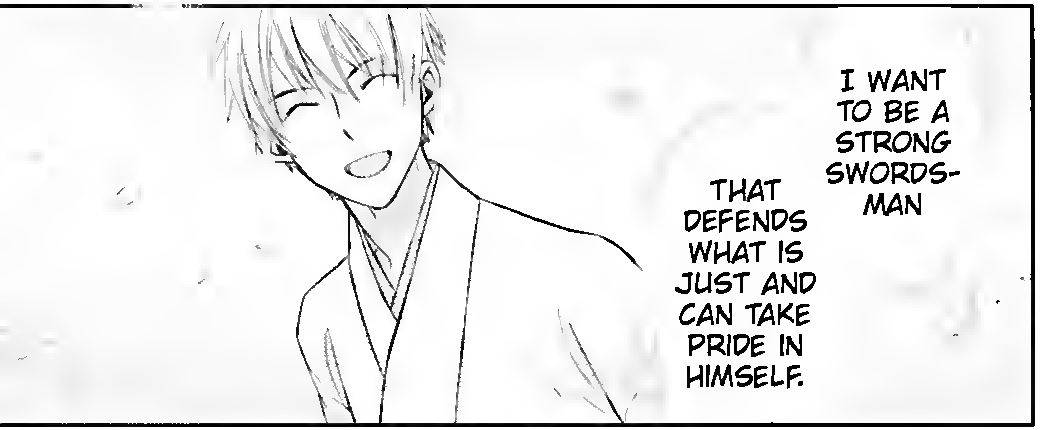
SWSSH
SOUNDS LIKE IT'S THIS WEAKLING'S BEDTIME!
SEISHIRO!
HARUMA!
GRIPP
LOOK CAREFULLY!

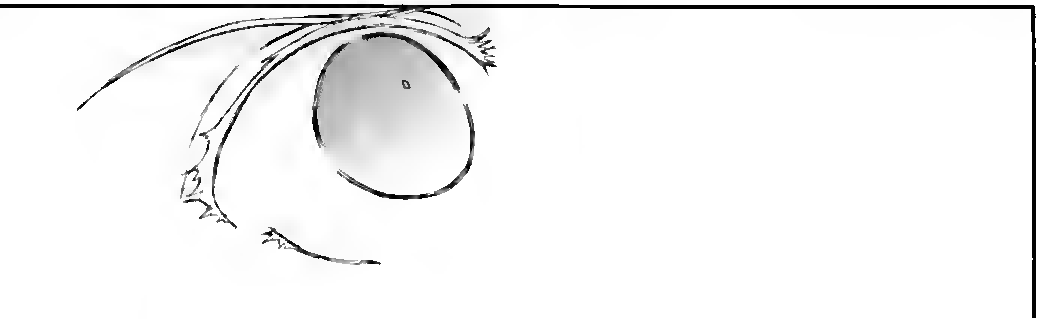
BOOM
SLASS

SWISSH
PWSH
A SWORD...
IS NOT A TOOL OF WAR.
IT IS A SOURCE OF POWER TO DEFEND WHAT IS RIGHT!
YOUR MIND AND BODY MUST BE STRONG FOR THAT!
PERSEVERING WITH THAT DETERMINATION AND PRIDE IS WHAT WE CALL BEING A TRUE SWORDSMAN!

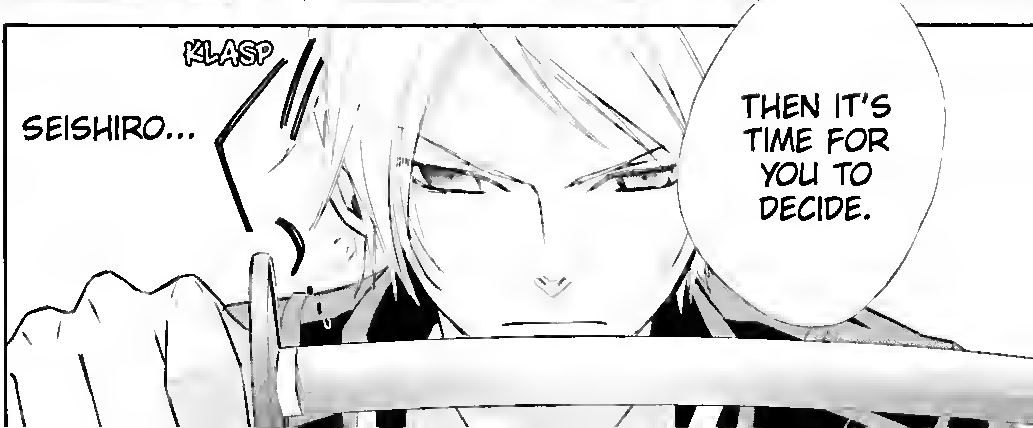
THAT'S HOW HE WAS, RIGHT?

HARUMA...
WASN'T HE STRONG TOO?!
YOU WATCHED SEISHIRO ALL ALONG!


I WANT TO BE A STRONG SWORDS-MAN
THAT DEFENDS WHAT IS JUST AND CAN TAKE PRIDE IN HIMSELF.



YOU SEE IT NOW.
HEH
NODD
THIS IS THE WAY OF THE SWORD.
IF YOU SEE IT...
....


THEN IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DECIDE.
KLASP
SEISHIRO...

SLASH
THIS IS THE WORLD HE SAW!

I THINK YOU'LL BE A FINE SWORDS-MAN.
HEH
I THINK I UNDER-STAND NOW...
....
SEISHIRO...
THIS IS THE WORLD YOU LOVED EVEN AFTER YOUR DEATH...

BOOM
LET'S RUN!
ALL RIGHT.
KRSSH
STOP RIGHT THERE!
YOU THREE!
REE-WHOO
HUH?
SWORDSMEN ARE STILL UNDER INTENSE PRESSURE...
JIN.
We should get going
CRAP!
THEY'RE ALREADY HERE!
That was fast!
IN THE MODERN AGE, A MOVEMENT TO SUPPORT THE ABOLITION OF SWORDS IS RISING.
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND!
WHY? WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
FREEZE!
LET'S GO!
THE WORLD OF SWORDS MAY BE GONE TOMORROW.
HUH?!
I ASSUMED YOU WERE TEACHING A DEAR LITTLE CONFUSED UNDERCLASSMAN.
I didn't want to interfere
HEY, HIDEHITO! WHY DIDN'T YOU HELP US BACK THERE?
You only lent me your sword!

THEY WILL BE-LIEVE IN THEIR CONVIC-TIONS...

AND THEY WILL CON-TINUE TO DRIVE FORTH!

WELL, WHAT-EVER...

FOR NOW...

RUN!

END

SAMURAI DRIVE

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR PICKING UP VOLUME 1 OF *SAMURAI DRIVE*. THIS IS MY FIRST ORIGINAL SERIALIZED COMIC, AND I WENT THROUGH A LOT OF TRIAL AND ERROR WHILE WRITING STORIES FOR MY CHARACTERS. YOUR SUPPORT IS SOMETHING I APPRECIATE A LOT. I WANT ALL MY READERS TO CONTINUE ENJOYING THIS, SO I WILL CONTINUE TO WORK HARD, AND I HOPE YOU'LL BE THERE FOR THE RIDE.

SAMURAI DRIVE IS DRAWN WITH PASSION, BUT MY BIG-HEARTED EDITOR, WAKABAYASHI, AND HIS SUPER ANGELIC ASSISTANT, MAME-SHIBA, COVER ANYTHING INSUFFICIENT. WITHOUT THESE TWO, THIS COMIC WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. THE THREE OF US CREATE THIS COMIC TOGETHER! AND THANKS TO THE DESIGNER, FUJITA, THE COMIC ITSELF IS VERY NICELY MADE. *SAMURAI DRIVE* WOULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT EVERYONE'S HELP. THANK YOU VERY MUCH! I HOPE YOU'LL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ME!

THANK YOU TO T-A, R-DO AND MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY WHO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT ME EVERY DAY. I APPRECIATE YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. AND THANKS TO ALL MY READERS AS WELL!

I HOPE YOU'LL KEEP READING *SAMURAI DRIVE*. SEE YOU IN VOLUME 2!!

SPRING 2010 – FUJIKO KOSUMI

SAMURAI DRIVE
Volume 1

KADOKAWA MANGA

Story and Art by
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